

THE PRACTICAL  
JUNIOR TEACHER



THE HALL OF A JUNIOR GIRLS SCHOOL

[E-3662]

*Frontispiece*

# THE PRACTICAL JUNIOR TEACHER

*A Guide to the Most Modern Methods of Teaching Children in  
the Junior Schools*

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*Contributions by Leading Authorities in Every Branch of Junior Education,  
with Numerous Illustrations, Schemes of Work, and Practical Suggestions*

VOLUME I

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

By F. F. POTTER, C.B.E., M.A., B.Sc.

THESE volumes of *THE PRACTICAL JUNIOR TEACHER* have already proved themselves immensely popular among teachers and it is hoped that the present new and revised edition will be equally welcomed in the post-war Junior Schools.

They are intended to illustrate and expound modern theory and practice in the organization and curricula of Schools for pupils from the age of seven years to eleven years. In their pages will be found an exposition of all the subjects now dealt with in these schools, and these subjects are discussed with that breadth of outlook and wealth of illustration which should make them invaluable to all teachers, whether young beginners fresh from their course of training or more mature teachers already tested in the keen fire of experience.

Here will be found no mere theoretical treatment of the old "School Method" type, for each subject is discussed for its own intrinsic merit as well as for its possibilities and limitations when taught to pupils of Junior School age. The list of contributors is a guarantee of the value of the contents, for it contains the names of writers of experience drawn from every branch of public education, including teachers, lecturers, organizers, inspectors, and administrators, all of whom contribute in detail to the particular subjects of which they have expert knowledge and the result is a practical, reliable, and authentic guide to every teacher in a Junior School.

Since the passing of the latest Education Act, in 1944, the Junior School has taken on a new and enhanced significance as the necessary preliminary and gateway for all pupils leading to their appropriate type of secondary education. Some two decades have passed since the publication of the famous "Hadow" Report on the Education of the Adolescent and we have now witnessed the transformation of the "Senior" school into the Secondary Modern School. Further, the 1944 Education Act envisages the ultimate disappearance of the "All-age" School, all of which indicates the importance of the Junior School period in the pupil's life.

It must be confessed that since "Hadow," the Junior School, in spite of a later helpful Report of the old Consultative Committee of the former Board of Education, has tended to be somewhat neglected, in contrast to the increasing attention given to Nursery and Infant Schools at one end of its age range, and to Secondary Schools at the other. This "Cinderella" treatment of the Junior period has been even more pronounced where numbers in any given area did not permit of the separate organization of Infant Schools and Junior Schools, and in consequence both Infants and Juniors were merged in a single Primary School. But in the "Development Plans" submitted to the Ministry by local authorities as required under the Act, this neglect appears

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likely to be remedied, and the Junior School will thus take its rightful place in the educational system. It was to meet the need of such schools that these volumes were originally prepared, particularly since the work in Junior Schools had long suffered from various misconceptions. It had long been regarded merely as a period of dull, mechanical drudgery, the mastery of the *tools* of the intellect, reading, writing, and figuring being considered of more importance than knowledge itself. In the prevalent large classes, frequently housed in stuffy, crowded rooms, there was little or no attempt to develop the individuality of each pupil by means of those "activity" and "project" methods, upon which doctors and psychologists now so rightly insist during the impressionable years from seven to eleven.

Gradually all this is being remedied. Many new Junior Schools have been built, and more are projected, providing, in spacious, airy buildings, those facilities and amenities which are the basis of real educational development. At the same time, as soon as circumstances permit, all those older buildings which are capable of improvement will be extended and modernized, and it is for all Junior teachers, whether in the new buildings or the old, that these volumes are intended, for good work is possible in the older buildings as well as in the new. They seek to further the new and enlightened conception of a Junior School as a centre of directed activity, with its emphasis on learning by *doing*. The normal characteristics of pupils from the age of seven to eleven are now generally known and among the foremost of these is the child's joy of achievement. It is for this reason that pupils of this age will attack with conscientious diligence tasks of the utmost drudgery, and these volumes seek by means of the various activities they suggest to banish from the Junior School that reproach that the usual curriculum is dull, cramped, and strictly utilitarian. Allied to the child's satisfaction in the successful completion of a specific task is the more general delight in all forms of activity which have some object clearly in view, and finally there is the child's insatiable curiosity at this age, which finds vent in destructive as well as constructive activity.

It is suggested in these volumes that "Activity Methods" shall be introduced wherever possible, for it is recognized that some enthusiastic teachers and schools have made a splendid success of this method and are able to teach all the ordinary "subjects" through the development of suitable "projects." Each teacher must, however, largely work out for himself (and his pupils) the specific form that activities will take for each class, and the amount of time to be given to them. It would seem, however, that before the method is generally adopted in schools, much more experiment and experience is desirable. In the meantime many Junior Schools will continue to be run on conventional time-tables, having the usual "subject" basis and it is accordingly on these lines that these volumes have been written. The predominant characteristics of child life mentioned above have guided and inspired the treatment of the various subjects, while at the same time every effort has been made to maintain

the balance between the view that the Junior School is a separate entity in itself, unrelated to any other type of school, and the view that it is merely a transitory and preparatory period between the Infants' School and the Secondary School. It is with this hopeful vision of a newer, finer, and more characteristic Junior School still to come, that this work is offered to that great army of teachers, upon whom, in the end, the realization of this vision must depend.

F. F. POTTER

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NOTE. The illustrations in this volume have been designed to be as far as possible of practical use in conveying correct information to the reader.

## CHARTS WITH THIS VOLUME

## CHAUCER FRIEZE

The Yeoman, Squire, and Knight (Colour); The Ploughman and the Miller (Colour); The Yeoman; The Knight

## STORY BUILDING: THE POLAR BEAR

The Start; The Chase; The Halt; The Meeting

## A LULLABY OF THE IROQUOIS

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## THE JUNIOR SCHOOL

*The primary school has its special opportunities, problems, and difficulties; and these it must encounter by developing its own methods, perfecting its own technique and establishing more firmly its own standards of achievement and excellence.—REPORT ON THE PRIMARY SCHOOL, 1931.*

THE Junior School as we know it to-day is a comparatively recent addition to our educational system. *Suggestions for Teachers* made a distinction between the four stages of education—nursery, infant, junior, and senior—for the first time in 1927. In 1931 the famous *Primary School Report*, which is still the best book about the Junior School, gave an inspiring official recognition to the principle of the Junior School. But in spite of this official blessing, development was neither smooth nor rapid and even to-day reorganization is far from complete, and incidentally the word "Primary" is still used sometimes for the Junior School and sometimes (now more often) for all pre-Secondary Education.

The economies enforced by the depression of the early thirties, the reorganization necessary to meet the planned raising of the school-leaving age in 1939, and the standstill during the war years, all militated against the rapid implementation of the Hadow scheme. What reorganization there was took the form, in the main, of providing new buildings for the post-primary groups, and this meant that the primary schools were left to make the best use they could of the old unsuitable buildings of the all-age schools.

As the Central Advisory Council for Education (England) says in *School and Life*: "Primary

Schools have had a particularly raw deal as a result of the partial application of the Hadow Report."

Juniors and Infants, who are just at the age when movement and activity are of vital importance, are housed in buildings that cannot possibly provide the necessary space, light, and fresh air. And to add insult to injury the teachers who are devotedly coping with all these difficulties are quite often regarded by the public and some of their colleagues as being somehow inferior to the teachers of older children. In fact, as an editorial in *The Times Educational Supplement* pointed out, the younger the child the greater must be the teacher's understanding and teaching ability, because the child is less able to contribute consciously to his own education.

Recognition of the full importance of the Junior School stage has been slow in coming. It is notable, for instance, that it is only in recent years that investigations into its methods and psychology have been taking place. The 1944 Act, however, at last gives this phase in the child's life the recognition it deserves.

The Junior School age limits, seven to eleven years, are purely arbitrary ages chosen largely for administrative convenience. A strong case can be made for extending the Infant stage, at least for backward children, to eight years, while

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the wisdom of transfer at eleven years is open to grave doubt because at that age aptitudes and abilities of great importance in adult life have scarcely developed sufficiently to be measured.

The Junior School stage must, of course, be regarded as part of a continuous and connected scheme of education for the child, with intimate contact both with the Infant and the Secondary Schools. But at the same time it forms an essential phase, with its own opportunities and difficulties, and with its own methods and technique based on the needs of the children at that particular age.

A number of prominent educationists have drawn attention to the deplorable conditions in many Junior Schools. This is a sign of the times, for things are changing and moving, and in spite of the fact that *School and Life* says that it will take fifty years to bring the Junior Schools up to date, we are living in exciting times for education, when teachers are showing a keen interest in new methods and when new methods of training teachers are giving an added momentum to the new movement.

### *The Characteristics of the Junior School Child*

Too little research has been carried out with the seven to eleven age group, but Burt's work, to be found in the Primary School Report, is excellent, and other research is going on at the moment. The importance of knowledge of this work to Junior School teachers cannot be over-emphasized, and it is helpful to keep contact with the Institute of Education for the area.

The Junior School child is full of vigour and takes a great delight in all kinds of activity. He is extremely interested in his surroundings and full of curiosity about all he sees, while his desire for experience is insatiable. His interest is intense but often short-lived. He has a creative urge, which makes him eager to construct things. He delights in performing simple tasks that demand a certain dexterity and skill and give him a sense of accomplishment. He is interested in character and purpose, shape, form, and colour, and the use of objects.

At seven, when he first comes into the Junior

School, a child reasons through concrete experiences, but gradually these are replaced by language. He is a keen observer and takes a great pleasure in reproducing his observations in speech and writing. He also creates his own immature world of imagination and emotion and, in order to communicate these things to others, does his utmost to master language.

The Junior School child is not usually troubled by serious physical disorders, although he may suffer from weaknesses left by diseases he had at the infant stage. His powers of resistance are high and he makes a quick recovery from fatigue.

By the end of the Junior School period children show a wide range of intelligence, and an immense change in interest and outlook.

The Junior Child tends to leave behind his infant dependence on the good opinion of the teacher and comes more and more to depend on the good opinion of his contemporaries. A weak teacher will find the children combining against her. A good teacher must earn the respect of her children by being just, good-humoured, sensible, firm, and sure of herself. The Junior School teacher disregards these characteristics at her peril; the best teachers use them as a firm foundation upon which to build their teaching.

### *The Purpose of the Junior School*

If children are to have a happy, healthy and vigorous childhood, then it is the teacher's duty to see that their physical and mental development are in no way retarded. Although physical and mental development are fully interdependent, it will be easier, for the sake of clarity, to consider them separately.

### *Physical Development*

Seven to eleven years of age is a period of steady growth, when acute infectious diseases are not so liable to occur, but it is a time when children may suffer from the after-effects of diseases which they had at an earlier age. The opportunity should be taken to remedy these defects and the child's body should be built up

to meet the heavy demands which will be made upon it during puberty.

Attention must be paid to trying to ensure that the children get sufficient exercise, rest, and sleep, and that their food is nutritious. Much of what teachers call "laziness" is nothing

certain fundamentals without which he would be at a great disadvantage in our present-day world.

Our first duty is to see that he can use language clearly and with dignity. We therefore teach him to speak clearly and correctly, to



FIG. 1  
*Model of the Local Brickworks*

more than a defence mechanism set to work in a child who is suffering from ill-health.

### *Mental Development*

Under this heading it is possible to make four broad subdivisions—

- (a) Factual knowledge.
- (b) Ability to co-ordinate body movements and brain.
- (c) Community feeling.
- (d) Moral awareness.

(a) FACTUAL KNOWLEDGE. In the Junior School we expect the normal child to acquire

read with understanding, enjoyment and zest, to write legibly, simple, well spelt statements in sentences, and to listen attentively.

We expect him to know how to use the fundamental rules in arithmetic and apply them to everyday occurrences within his experience.

We expect him to be able to take part in constructive work which will stimulate his intelligence and give him an insight into, and sympathy for, the great historic crafts, with an appreciation for beautiful things. We cannot expect a high standard of achievement from him, but there must be thoroughness and honesty of work.

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Through literature the children should have contact with great men and women and have some appreciation of our past history.

For many years the Free Place of "Scholarship" examination at eleven years was for many Junior Schools the dominating influence in its choice of syllabus. Conscientious schoolmasters and schoolmistresses felt it their duty to get as many children "through the scholarship" as possible. Moreover, officials and other people outside the school often tended to judge a school by the number of "scholarships" gained each year. As a result of this, schools concentrated on English and Arithmetic, in the narrowest academic sense, and those children who plainly could not reach scholarship standard were often pushed into the background.

Nowadays most education authorities have adopted a new form of examination which includes an intelligence test, an arithmetic test which depends largely on speed and accuracy and the understanding of simple problems, and an English comprehension test based on a given passage. This type of examination discourages cramming, and, when taken in conjunction with a report extracted from the child's cumulative record card, is more effective for indicating the type of secondary education most suitable for each child.

More important than this, however, is the fact that it is becoming progressively possible to give the Junior child a liberal education by including those important subjects which were at one time looked upon as "trifles."

(b) **ABILITY TO CO-ORDINATE BODY MOVEMENTS AND BRAIN.** The seven-year-old who has attended an Infants' School where he has practised free movement, games, dancing and eurhythmics, has gained a considerable control over his major muscles, but he is still clumsy and will need more practise in similar activities, with the addition of more formal physical training. By this means he will acquire a poise and gracefulness which he can get in no other way.

The finer muscles like those of the eye and the fingers are only brought under control gradually; and if fine work is expected from children at too early an age, strain, both mental and physical, is likely to occur. Disciplined

and purposeful activity, such as constructive work in which the child learns by doing, and acquires simple manual skill, is invaluable.

Movement is essential to the normal child's development and teachers should be prepared to use it and not inhibit it, as is the tendency of so many grown-ups.

(c) **COMMUNITY FEELING.** In school we have a valuable opportunity for providing children with an environment in which they can practise the standards of living that make community life possible. As a member of a class a child has to submit to a certain amount of discipline, he has to be prepared to live with others without annoying them, and he has to realize that he can have only his fair share of personal attention. In other words, he has to learn to co-operate with others and "find his place."

The importance of a good school community cannot be over-emphasized, for it gives the child opportunities for exercising community feeling which he cannot get in the more restricted family circle. Such a school is a community where young and old are engaged in learning by co-operation and experiment.

Schools to-day are depending less and less on passive obedience and mass instruction and so are able, through individual and group work, to introduce the children to new and interesting experiences that can be explored, thus using the sympathy, imagination, and social spirit of the child.

If the teacher wishes to carry out this part of her work conscientiously, she must make it her business to find out as much as possible about the background of her children. She must know what books they like, what films they see, and which radio programmes they listen to, and above all she must, through the Parent-Teachers' Association, make contact with the children's parents.

(d) **MORAL AWARENESS.** This quality implies a knowledge of right and wrong and a desire to do what is right. Without it a child's education and life is built on a foundation of shifting sand. The Christian ethic and the Platonic ideals of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness form a very solid foundation upon which to build. The character of the school can have a strong moral influence on a child's future life. But the most important

factor is the teacher's character, and the example she sets.

### *Achieving this Purpose*

If this purpose is to be achieved, a teacher must not only be a skilful practitioner of his or her craft, but must also have a vocation for the job. This is dealt with more fully later in this chapter.

It is essential that the Junior School child should have a feeling of security in his school life; therefore he must have close personal contact with his teacher. To achieve this fully, classes should not exceed thirty children, and group work is particularly valuable in the large classes of to-day. Changes of teacher or method should be carried out with care, while schemes of work should be very carefully graded according to the ability of the individual child. The methods of teaching the basic skills should be uniform throughout the school and consultation between members of the staff should be frank and frequent.

It should always be remembered that the happiness and fullness of a child's life depend upon circumstances and people beyond his control. Teachers must therefore recognize differences in capacity and temperament, and not aim at imposing artificial patterns of life through a dominating personality, but rather at helping the pupils to co-ordinate their own mental and physical powers.

There should be no artificial conditioning of ways of thinking and acting, for the children will eventually have to live their own lives, and it is a teacher's duty to encourage a sturdiness of body and mind that will fit them to face any emergency.

Teachers must at all times allow for variations in intelligence, imagination, and emotions. This means that the class teaching method, which was for many years accepted as the only way to cope with large classes, is often a waste of both the teacher's and the children's time. Most teachers will have had the experience of giving a class a lesson knowing full well that after five or ten minutes the backward children are no longer listening, after ten or fifteen minutes the normal children's attention is

wandering, and after twenty minutes the whole class is glassy-eyed, thinking of anything but what the teacher is trying to expound.

Class teaching has its place, but it should not be the method used for every lesson.

The aim of the school should be to introduce the pupils to experiences in an orderly and intelligent manner so that their innate powers are developed. If the school succeeds in doing this, then the children will acquire knowledge in the process, their efforts being stimulated by their interest, and the value of what they acquire enhanced by their appreciation of its purpose and significance. Activity of all kinds is natural to a child, and it is essential to his growth. Teachers should keep this basic characteristic in mind and build upon it. It is essential, of course, to see that the activity is not aimless.

Whatever subject is taught the teacher will get the best results if he starts from the concrete facts, avoiding over-intellectualism and narrow limits. The subjects which appear in school time-tables should not be, and cannot be, independent entities: they are simply divisions of the general field of knowledge. There is a place for the traditional subjects, but their presentation as such is not the most fruitful method for the seven to eleven-year-old group.

The curriculum should be humane with all the dead wood ruthlessly hacked away, giving opportunities for inquiry and experiment, based on a vivid appreciation of the needs and possibilities of children. Similarly the curriculum should not be loaded with inert ideas and crude blocks of fact devoid of significance until related to some interest in the mind of the pupils.

Subjects taught must be vivid and realistic, full of movement and life. Such teaching develops naturally from centres of interest or projects, which give rise to intelligent, sensible, concrete activities so that the work is related to the interest and experience of the children. Education, far from being a method for assimilating dead matter, should be associated with a group of activities through which the child's natural capabilities are exercised and his curiosity aroused and satisfied.

To the successful teacher every child in her

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class (even if there are fifty on roll) is an individual who at appropriate times must receive special attention. With large classes, or classes where there is a large age range or a large range of ability, this means extra work and careful organization, but it is well worth it. Some children, especially if they are of a quiet, retiring nature, do not ask questions when there is something which they do not understand. This means that they often miss essential points, and this holds up their progress so that they get to the top classes in the Junior School unable to reach the standard they should in the tool subjects.

Progress must be checked regularly. Cumulative record cards are essential for directing attention to individuals and recording their progress throughout their school life.

"The next fifty years," says *Primary Education*, "will be a dynamic rather than a static period of our history. People will have to be more adaptable, more mobile, more ingenious, more ready to meet novel situations and more ready to master a variety of techniques and processes. Dexterity of hand and nimbleness of mind will be more in demand than dull mechanical labour."

If teachers are to help their children to develop and extend the initiative which is going to be so important to them, they must allow them to experiment and find out things for themselves. Constant class teaching at its worst will tend to discourage displays of initiative. Activity methods are an important factor for its encouragement.

Good teachers owe the main part of their success to their ability to arouse the children's interest. Interest is like the priming petrol used to start an engine, which, once it has fired, goes on of its own accord. The teacher awakens the child's interest in a subject and he, either spontaneously or with suitable encouragement, perseveres in his attempt to discover all he can about it.

A child cannot be detached from his background and if a teacher is to deal efficiently with individual children, she must know a great deal about their homes. She should aim at getting to know the children's parents and seek their co-operation. A Parent-Teachers' Association

is of the utmost importance to Primary Schools.

### *The Junior School Teacher*

Any system of education stands or falls by the quality of the teachers carrying it out. Good teachers discover for themselves the best and easiest way of teaching particular subjects. The use of activities and the arousing of interest, for instance, have been recognized by teachers for many years. The Junior School teacher has acquired his or her skill through experience, and a constant determination to know more and more about education. He does not make the mistake of some teachers who look upon psychology with suspicion, for no teacher nowadays can afford to ignore its findings.

It is essential that the teachers should have a knowledge of, and a liking and respect for, children. They must also have grit and determination because they will find that circumstances are often against them: buildings and equipment are likely to be bad, while apparatus and suitable books will be difficult to acquire. Such circumstances give much opportunity for initiative and originality, although these qualities are always part of the equipment of the good teacher.

Teaching methods, if they are to be good, cannot be stereotyped; and teachers must be guided by their own experience to use those methods which they can use best. No single device can ever be relied on to give good results with all classes, so teachers must be prepared to adapt their approach to the mood and attainment of the particular group with which they are dealing.

The character of a class will inevitably be coloured by the character of the teacher, just as the character of a school depends upon the character of the staff and the head teacher.

A good teacher, then, must have a sense of responsibility, a great deal of initiative, a willingness to co-operate with colleagues, and a devotion to duty and conscientiousness above the ordinary. At the same time he or she must be imaginative, adaptable, and ingenious, and above all must have integrity of character and evenness of temperament. Teachers needs these

qualities because whether they like it or not their pupils will consciously and unconsciously imitate them in speech, deportment, appearance, manners, and behaviour. For instance, the teacher's social influence at functions like school meals is incalculable. So he or she must always be aware of the importance of precept and example.

The time has gone when a teacher could think of herself as standing in front of a class imparting knowledge with talk and chalk. Now it is the teacher's duty to prepare the environment and then advise and guide the child in his exploration of it. The teacher should be prepared to stand back and criticize not only the child but herself. At all times the teacher should aim at helping the child to gain stability and balance. If a teacher is to retain the respect of her children she must administer irreproachable justice, and any classification she gives must be free from personal bias. Her teaching of the tool subjects must be fresh and vivid, while she must have an intimate and personal knowledge of each child's background.

### *Specialization*

Teachers who teach only one subject are out of place in the Junior School, for the Junior child needs the feeling of security which daily contact with the same teacher brings. In addition a class of Junior children is happier when accommodated in one room which they can make their own, for a constant changing of classrooms and teachers can have a very unsettling effect.

Nevertheless, the Junior teacher with special ability in physical training, music, art, and needlework should be given the opportunity to teach these subjects to other classes as well as his or her own. Sometimes older teachers are only too glad to have their physical training lessons taken by younger people. We are not all musically gifted and a teacher with musical ability can be sure of a very warm welcome in any school. In Junior Schools which are fortunate enough to have these gifted teachers on their staffs, it should not be assumed that they take all the lessons in their particular subject. Other teachers who are interested in

the subject should be given the opportunity of teaching it, and the specially gifted teacher should be in the background available for consultation and advice.

### *Discipline*

Only too often in the past a teacher's reputation as a disciplinarian depended upon ability to keep the class quiet, and this often meant that he or she was driven to use corporal punishment. Nowadays things have changed: the use of corporal punishment is largely looked upon as a sign of weakness in a teacher, and there is no doubt that if a teacher prepares suitable and interesting work and understands her children, the old type of discipline simply does not apply.

The Junior child as he loses his infant dependence upon adults becomes critical of them and woe betide those who are too weak to gain his allegiance. He despises weakness and will exploit it mercilessly. But he will respond to adults who earn his respect through being sensible, firm, good-humoured and sure of themselves. He needs a genuine, understanding authority, because he is leaving behind his infant world of phantasy and is moving towards matter-of-fact reality where he wants to accomplish physical deeds of prowess and use his hands skilfully. He begins to like games with rules and although he still has not developed a "team spirit," he is learning a valuable lesson in social behaviour.

It is important that he should be given responsibility within his capacity. Let him help to look after the classroom, fill in temperature and weather charts, act as librarian, and take charge of pets and garden plots and tools.

The tone of the school is of vital importance: if it is good, rules will be obeyed because the child will wish to avoid the censure of his contemporaries. The only discipline that is really worth while is imposed by the child himself because he believes that the demands made upon him are reasonable, right, and consistent with his conscience. This, of course, is the ideal and all children will fall from grace many times. The child must have confidence in his teacher's sympathy and understanding. He will respect

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authority if it is just and consistent, because it gives him a sense of security and relieves him from responsibility. It is most important that discipline should be consistent and not dependent on the teacher's mood, otherwise the child's mind will be confused and he will suffer from a feeling of insecurity.

Those teachers who rely on instant, unquestioning obedience do the children and the school a disservice, because while the child may behave well under supervision, when he is left to himself he will suffer from a reaction which will cause him to behave badly; weak-willed children under such a regime become even more timid and lacking in self-confidence. If a teacher's discipline is not based on a mutual liking and respect for children, then it must rest on coercion, which at once sets up a series of difficult problems and situations.

The example set by the teacher is of the greatest importance; if he controls his temper and tongue and behaves courteously and treats his pupils as reasonable human beings, giving them opportunities to exercise their own judgment, then he is justified in expecting good behaviour in return.

Children have to learn the difference between right and wrong, and when a child does something wrong, the consequences of his action should be explained to him. But make sure that the explanation is short, simple, and to the point, otherwise he will lose the thread of the argument and it will represent just so much wasted time. It is wise to anticipate misbehaviour, although it is also important that the child should have the opportunity of making the choice between good and bad within his experience and capacity.

We should expect obedience when a child's safety is concerned, when he has to be punctual, and when his health and cleanliness are in question. But qualities like good manners and politeness, which depend on sincerity, can be brought about only by persuasion and example. Things like nail-biting and stammering are not matters of obedience.

### *Punishments*

The belief that a child can be made good

through fear is no longer held by educationists, and this has led to a new attitude towards the question of punishment. If a child (as all children will) does some irritating piece of damage, make sure that he is being punished for offending against a principle rather than for the damage he has done. Before meting out punishment inquire into the child's motive and make sure that he knows what he has done wrong. If this is done then the child is being controlled through reason and not fear. It is of great importance not to assume angrily that the child is guilty. This is a bad approach because the child is frightened and instinctively protects himself, probably by lying. Moreover, antagonism and resistance are aroused at the outset. On all such occasions the teacher must remain calm and impersonal.

The best punishment consists in allowing the child to put right the wrong he has done: if he feels that he has been dealt with justly he will respond willingly. Never punish a first offence, but explain reasonably and calmly why it is wrong. If punishment has to be carried out, do it at once while the offence is still fresh in the child's mind. A child forgets quickly, and punishment deferred becomes useless and might arouse resentment. But never punish in anger: it is better to postpone it. When a punishment has been given, forget all about it and do not refer to it again. If you do, the child, quite rightly, will resent it and is likely to rebel or sulk.

If you are always punishing a child, then you should wonder if your treatment of him is wrong; if it continues he is likely to become indifferent. When punishment is seldom given it is all the more effective.

Corporal punishment should be used seldom, if ever, because it often arouses fear and hatred and leaves a feeling of guilt. If it is used too frequently a child becomes hardened and might even come to provoke such punishment.

Punishments should fit the particular case and situation. Such punishments include—

- (a) Depriving the child of some privilege or valued possession.
- (b) If the child is a nuisance to others, isolate him.
- (c) Let the child make logical amends.

(d) Some children are sufficiently punished if they see the teacher is displeased. This power should be used with great care.

Practised teachers guard against letting situations develop which might lead to disobedience or other troublesome behaviour. They make sure that anything they ask a child to do is reasonable and fully understood, and they never show that they have doubts about being obeyed—otherwise their doubts will be confirmed.

At all times teachers should use requests rather than commands, for commands arouse resentment and resistance at all ages. If children are treated with courtesy, then courtesy can be expected in return. Teachers must be consistent because children, like other people, despise inconsistency.

Praise is a powerful weapon and should be used in preference to blame.

Bribery in the form of pennies, sweets, or other rewards for good behaviour should never be used, for the child behaves well because of the reward and not because it is the right thing to do. It makes him mercenary and can lead to bitterness and rivalry with other children. Injustice is inexcusable: it rouses fear, lying, and deceit, and it might give rise to rebellion, cruelty, and destructiveness.

If a child feels that he can depend upon understanding, sympathy, and affection, and has a consistent example of good behaviour from the teacher, then he is likely to behave as well as any child can be expected to.

### *Mechanical Aids in the Junior School*

VISUAL. *Films* could be one of the teacher's

most valuable aids. Unfortunately, few schools are equipped with apparatus, and films have to be ordered several weeks in advance. Moreover, the supply of really suitable films is very limited. It is to be hoped that the efforts now being made in this direction will improve the position in the next few years.

*The Film Strip Projector* is extremely useful; good strips are available, and the apparatus is easily portable.

*The Lantern* is often heavy and bulky, and lantern slides are easily broken.

*The Episcope* can be used for projecting on to a screen the images of actual objects and pictures which can be placed easily in the apparatus. It is often bulky and heavy, but is a most useful piece of apparatus.

*The Efidiascope* is a combination of the Lantern and the Episcope and in spite of its bulk is most useful.

AURAL AIDS. *Radio* stories, music, and isolated lessons and talks can be very useful. A lesson series, however, is often difficult to fit in because time can so easily be wasted listening to material which is irrelevant to the needs of individual classes. Any radio lesson, of course, needs a careful introduction and follow-up by the teacher.

*The Gramophone* is extremely useful for music, speech, and dancing, since it can be used as and when the need arises. Records can be stopped and repeated at the teacher's convenience.

Any type of mechanical aid in school, if it is to be really useful, must be simple to operate, easy to move and erect, and any material it uses should be available at short notice.

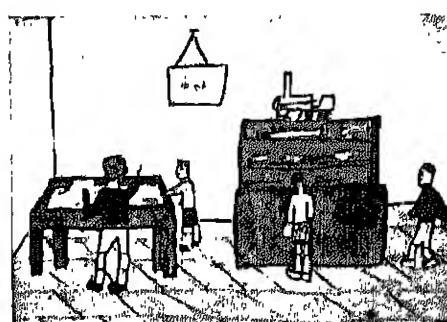


FIG. 2

*Drawing by Junior School Child: In a Museum*

## THE CURRICULUM

"... the curriculum is to be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored. Its aim should be to develop in a child the fundamental human powers and to awaken him to the fundamental interests of civilized life so far as these powers and interests lie within the compass of childhood, to encourage him to attain gradually to that control and orderly management of his energies, impulses, and emotions which is the essence of moral and intellectual discipline, to help him to discover the idea of duty and to ensue it, and to open out his imagination and sympathies in such a way that he may be prepared to understand and to follow in later years the highest examples of excellence in life and conduct."—REPORT ON THE PRIMARY SCHOOL.

**I**N making schemes of work it is essential that teachers should keep in mind the above much-quoted, but too little practised, paragraph.

Since 1931 the Primary Schools have had time to try out various types of schemes and methods, and their success or failure is of great interest to conscientious teachers.

*Primary Education* (Report of the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland) lists the following well-informed criticisms of Primary Education—

(1) Both the content of the curriculum and methods of instruction are traditional: they were laid down several generations ago when ideas and needs were different from those of to-day, and though modified in detail have never been adequately analysed by scientific methods or fundamentally changed. Some subjects, or parts of subjects, and methods of teaching are challenged as being antiquated and wasteful of precious time.

(2) The hard division between "subjects" is a logical and adult conception that is justified neither by life experience nor as a natural way of learning.

(3) The whole atmosphere is too "academic," verbal rather than real, cut off from the living interests of childhood.

(4) Emphasis is laid on passivity rather than activity. Children are required to sit still, listen, accept, and reproduce either orally or on paper.

(5) The long accepted tradition of class teaching is seriously questioned, on the ground that it bores equally those who know the lesson already, and those who will never know it, and that it rests on the baseless assumption that all or most can be brought up to a certain standard of attainment in a given time.

(6) Many of the less gifted children are resentful of school, leave it gladly and as soon as possible, and soon forget most of what they have learnt.

(7) The attempt is made to teach too much, and as a result pupils are not taught with sufficient thoroughness.

If these criticisms are valid, even in part, then we should consider the possibility of a new approach in our curriculum and methods.

Some educationists maintain that there should

be no scheme of work, for, they say, such schemes are incompatible with the natural growth and development of the child and deprive him of opportunities for showing initiative and self-expression. With highly gifted teachers and reasonably sized groups this might be true. But even in these exceptional cases there would always be the danger of the children acquiring an unorganized body of knowledge revolving round some particular topic, and that the teacher would not be able to see where he was going.

In addition, although work on projects or centres of interest provides a great incentive to learn, it does not necessarily ensure the acquiring of a sound basis of the necessary knowledge of the tool subjects.

It would seem, therefore, that schemes of some kind are desirable. The best schemes are undoubtedly built on general lines giving the minimum ground to be covered and allowing the teacher to pursue a topic so that it develops freely and naturally.

As *Primary Education* says: "The general purpose of the curriculum must direct the special approach to each 'subject.' This purpose is surely to give meaning to the apparently chaotic, to give direction and discipline to natural activity, to make what seems complex, difficult, and awkward into something that is simple, easy and graceful, to give a sense of mastery over self and circumstance."

### Physical Education

Physical Training, which adapts and uses the natural and restless activity of children, is most effective when the children are thinking about what they are doing and enjoying themselves. So the activities and games used should both

have a purpose and give pleasure. Invaluable opportunities are given for training in leadership and taking responsibility, while at the same time children are taught to respect reasonable law and order, co-operating with ready obedience to attain some common purpose. Their sense of rhythm is exercised and fulfilled and they have an opportunity for practising precision in timing. All kinds of traditional games and dances should be encouraged, but at all times they should be lively and merry. If the children spontaneously carry these activities into their free play, the teaching is successful.

The children find extra zest in their physical training if they are allowed to change into suitable clothing. The extra time and trouble taken in providing these clothes is well repaid by increased efficiency and the point given to hygiene lessons in cleanliness. All Physical Training should take place in the open air whenever possible.

Children have a natural zest for ball games, but these should not be over-organized, for through practical experience the children learn to obey rules for the best reasons.

Swimming is such an excellent activity that it should be taught whenever possible, and this in spite of the fact that visits to the swimming-pool use up so much valuable school time.

Some Junior Schools are experimenting with physical training apparatus which seems to have great possibilities in developing fearlessness, agility, poise, and initiative.

Teachers must recognize the wide difference in children's physical capacities and see that the weaker children do not strain themselves. When mixed classes are being taught it is necessary to make sure that the exercises are suitable for both boys and girls. Postural defects should be referred to experts for advice and treatment.

### *Hygiene*

Formal hygiene lessons are out of place in the Junior School. Plenty of opportunities will arise for giving incidental lessons about such things as personal cleanliness, care of the hair, teeth, nails, nose and ears, ventilation, tidiness and cleanliness of the classroom, and, through school meals, food.

Hygiene lessons are useless if the physical background of the school does not encourage cleanliness and healthy living. There should be facilities for washing before meals, and meals should be served under good conditions. W.C. accommodation should be modern and well planned, but in old buildings all we can attain is that they should be kept as clean as possible.

### *Art and Craft*

Between seven and eleven years children develop finer muscular control and greater discrimination in sight and hearing. Their powers of sustained voluntary attention increase and visual memory and imagery become stronger, while interests become more particularized and objective.

A child feels these growing powers and desires to try them out. He seeks to widen his horizon and satisfy his curiosity, and, by experimenting, his fingers learn delicacy. His attention is firmly held by the things he can do and he has a great urge to make things. It is important that we should make use of these natural desires, for they can be used for teaching dexterity of hand and nimbleness of mind, which will be of the utmost importance to a child in his future life.

If the child is allowed to explore some of the paths travelled by primitive man he will come to experiment with the traditional crafts like spinning, weaving and dyeing, basketry, pottery and the making of clay figures (which should be baked and fired), carving with a variety of tools and materials, and the construction of simple dwellings and forms of transport. In fact, he will be willing to try his hand at anything, and should have the opportunity of doing so.

If a variety of materials and tools are provided, the children will work happily at what appeals to them most. As *Art Education* says: "The junior child should not be subjected to the kind of logical syllabus in which the choice of subjects is designed to produce carefully graded skills—he will in fact, through trial and error, develop some skill and a measure of technique because he wants to get on with his job and to make something that satisfies him."

He can be given some instruction when he

asks for advice, and there will have to be some definite lessons on the knowledge, use, and care of tools. If these lessons are to be really successful classes or groups should contain not more than twenty children. When conditions make individual choice of work impossible, then it is of vital importance that anything made is worth making. Things like calendars, pads, and blotters can be real and useful. Cardboard and paper work should not be aimless but should lead up to bookbinding.

Drawing and painting from nature is not natural to the majority of children before adolescence; the teacher "cannot teach them how to draw, for they will still be drawing 'out of their heads.' They should therefore be left free to experiment, to use all kinds of ways and media, to draw with charcoal or pencil if they want to, or go direct at the matter with paint or brush." (*Art Education*.)

Interest and joy with no imposition of mature style should be the keynote. The child's attention, however, can profitably be drawn to the pleasure of rhythmic and harmonious pattern in colour.

Aesthetic appreciation comes at a later age but a firm foundation can be laid by seeing that the classroom is tastefully arranged and decorated with good pictures and illustrations and flowers.

Boys and girls can take the same craft lessons until about the ninth year; then the girls' natural interest in dress gives them a powerful incentive to learn needlework. They can make simple garments for themselves and their dolls, obtaining practice in designing and colour schemes. They should also learn to carry out simple repairs on their own clothes. The aim should be to teach daintiness and accuracy without the "fine" sewing which will tax and strain their eyes.

While the girls are doing their needlework, boys can learn to carry out simple repairs, like patching punctured football bladders and bicycle tyres, nailing shoes, darning socks and jerseys, repairing toys and books, and even learning the beginnings of cookery.

In the group and individual projects and centres of interest, there are usually a great number of models to be made, while History,

Geography and Nature Study, if well taught, always need some practical illustrations.

### *Arithmetic*

We should aim to achieve as a minimum—

(a) An automatic knowledge of the multiplication and addition tables in number, weight, length, capacity and time.

(b) Speed and accuracy in simple calculations involving the fundamental processes.

(c) The ability to relate (a) and (b) to everyday life.

(a) Can be achieved with efficiency only by using a variety of devices and methods after the children themselves have built up the tables. In moderation oral repetition can be very useful. Too much of it, however, prevents automatic answers to individual items.

(b) Can be aided by what is called "Mental" arithmetic. Carefully graded examples can teach useful "short cuts" and a large number of simple examples can indicate the way in which more complicated examples can be solved.

(c) At all times arithmetic must be connected up with other school subjects and the outside world. As far as possible real measures of length, weight, capacity, and time should be used in examples dealing with distances, sizes, time-tables, and prices of goods.

Work with concrete materials should be continued as long as it is needed, and it is important that there should be no feeling of hurry or over-anxiety to get on to formal arithmetic. Number readiness in children occurs at different ages, so teachers should not expect a general level of attainment. Moreover, there is no indication of the age at which new topics should be introduced.

Arithmetic teaching, then, must cater for individuals. If it is taught as a class subject it will waste the time of the more forward children and bewilder and discourage the backward ones. Class teachers will therefore find it necessary to divide the class into at least three groups.

Because arithmetic has to be dealt with in logical steps a child who has missed lessons

through absence or ill-directed attention, will not be able to do subsequent lessons, so it is necessary to revise constantly the fundamental processes.

If the teaching has been thorough, a high degree of accuracy can be demanded from the children. Children should be trained to check their own work and occasionally they should be encouraged to set their own sums.

The logical setting down of examples is very useful, but at the same time simple examples which can be solved with only a small amount of paper work should be accepted.

The arithmetic syllabus should not try to cover too much ground because in any class there is sure to be a wide range of attainment and the majority of pupils will only have a moderate ability. Pupils, however, who show a special aptitude must be allowed to go on ahead. All work set should be graded in difficulty to meet with the differing capacities.

In the elimination of errors, deal with individual and group errors separately.

Staff meetings should investigate the best methods of teaching arithmetic, and the results of any recent research in the subject should be brought to the teachers' notice. It is of great importance that all the teachers in a school, and all the schools in an area, should standardize their methods.

If arithmetic teaching is to succeed it must never be dull, but at all times full of life and interest.

### *Spoken English*

It is of the greatest importance that children should be taught to speak clearly, easily, correctly, and gracefully. Unfortunately, success in this direction is not general. A large part of this lack of success is undoubtedly due to the fact that "talking in school" is traditionally a misdemeanour and it is one of the teacher's main problems to encourage ready and spontaneous speech and yet maintain essential discipline in classes that are far too large. A cheerful, friendly atmosphere in which the child receives plenty of encouragement is absolutely essential.

If the teacher himself speaks well, with a

clear, unforced voice, the children will consciously and unconsciously imitate him.

Poverty of vocabulary and ideas is often the cause of poor speech and written work in children; therefore every effort should be made to enlarge both. Suitable books should be made available and classroom discussion of all kinds encouraged.

Faults should be eliminated by regular drill in the right sounds. Any such drill should be saved from dullness by introducing such things as games, tongue twisters, and competitions.

Teachers should make a study of the local dialect; where it is a genuine dialect it should be encouraged and a standard English developed alongside it.

### *Dramatic Work*

Dramatic work can be a great help in developing fluent and lively speech and should be given a generous amount of time. Set playlets are not so useful for classroom work as the dramatization of stories and incidents chosen by the children themselves.

Set plays, of course, will be taken when drama is studied as an art in itself, and there will inevitably be a close connection with music, drawing, and handicraft.

If the work is enjoyed and creative, the child will do his utmost to speak well and will willingly submit to the necessary discipline to acquire correct speech and poise. Acting is a natural mode of self-expression in children and should be fully utilized. There is no surer way of killing a play than by reading the parts round the class.

When a play is to be produced it is important to see that the children understand the characters. Only the best plays, of course, should be used, and it is always worth while to obtain the use of the best stage and best properties available. A school play performed in public is important because it is stimulating and joyful and adds colour and life to the work of the school.

Puppets, the Toy Theatre, the Shadow Theatre, and "Broadcasting" are all proved practical and useful aids to stimulating speech in schools.

## THE PRACTICAL JUNIOR TEACHER

### Reading

The ability to read is of the utmost importance to a child, for without it he is heavily handicapped in all school subjects.

In the lower forms of the Junior School the teachers must be acquainted with infant reading methods, and they must use these methods with the backward readers. Sympathetic treatment is vitally important; otherwise stagnation can set in. The very backward children should be dealt with by a member of the school staff who has made a study of reading and who is capable of diagnosing the reasons for the child's backwardness. Classes should be given a graded reading test and divided into groups according to their scores. The right reading materials (for the early stages well printed and illustrated books based on word frequency in which new words are introduced scientifically), should be selected for each group and the maximum practice given in oral and silent reading. Progress should be tested regularly.

Children's "reading ages" cover such a large range that it is clearly a waste of time to treat reading as a class lesson. Instead of, say, fifty copies of one book, it will be necessary to have small sets of graded readers, the simplest of which can be managed by the backward readers, who will thereby be stimulated by a sense of achievement.

Inevitably, reading will be connected with all the school activities, for the children will want to look up information for themselves. It is by this method that the habit of consulting a dictionary or encyclopaedia can be encouraged.

A large supply of books will be necessary and all schools should have school and class libraries from which books can be borrowed. Teachers should be available to give advice on the choice of books.

In the upper classes of the Junior School most of the reading should be individual and silent, but tests should be given to see how useful the reading has been. Occasionally a child should prepare a piece of prose which he can then read out to the class.

The teacher himself, of course, should be a first-class reader.

All teachers should be acquainted with *The Psychology and Teaching of Reading* by F. J. Schonell (Oliver and Boyd).

*Primary Education* gives an admirable summary of what training in factual comprehension in the Junior School should produce--

At the end of the primary stage the pupil should with greater or less facility according to natural endowment be able to look up a word in a dictionary, find from an atlas by using the index where any town is situated, find any telephone number if the name and address are given, use a railway or bus time-table, find the year of birth, country and main achievements of any famous man from a small encyclopaedia, read a simple plan, diagram, picture or tabular statement. He should be able to follow a progressive narrative, and distinguish the thread of a story from incidental details. He must begin his training in objective attitude towards printed statements; examine words and phrases carefully to realize not only what is said, but what may be inferred; and begin to draw a clear distinction between truth, fiction, and falsehood. We believe that the training of children in the habit and method of acquiring information, instead of cramming facts chosen by the teacher, is not only more fertile for the future and pleasanter in itself, but likely to result in the acquisition of far more information than the other method.

### Oral and Written Composition

The quality of any written work in which a child is given scope for self-expression, depends to a large extent on the amount and range of his powers of oral self-expression. If a child is given a thorough grounding in oral work, then his written work has an infinitely better chance of being good.

A child enjoys oral work and by this means is able to extend both his vocabulary and his range of ideas. Every lesson should give him the opportunity for practising connected and continuous speech while full use should be made of such devices as debates, courts, mock broadcasts, dramatic performances, set speeches, puppetry, and so on.

Written composition is nearly always begun too early in the Junior School. Oral practice should come first, the object being to get the children to "hear" the correct forms. It is also of importance that the child should have mastered the mechanics of writing. The first written exercises should be short and interesting, dealing with familiar topics. Later in the Junior School there can be narrative and descriptive

exercises with some exposition and possibly some argumentation.

It has not been unknown for teachers to set a weekly composition (the subject chosen on the spur of the moment), mark it and allow the children to copy out their spelling corrections. This usually means that there is no method, no aim, no standard, and no progression. If a composition lesson is to be successful, there must be preliminary discussion and preparation.

Teachers should not cross out every single mistake in a child's composition, because the total effect will be very discouraging to the child. It is much better to concentrate on one or two faults at a time. In assessing the value of a composition it is the content and ideas which matter most; merely avoiding mistakes is not merit.

Good written expression depends upon creating interest and giving reality to the work. Project work of all kinds gives many opportunities for interesting written work. The class or school magazine or a news sheet is very stimulating, while the collecting and binding together of the "best work" is also a useful incentive. If a particularly interesting piece of work is done, it should be read aloud to the class. The writing of small plays for puppetry or the shadow theatre is useful, while the writing of letters gives endless opportunities for real exercises. All letters should be written to real people and posted if possible. Pen friends in other schools or other countries are of immense value.

### *Spelling*

Because the spelling of so many of our English words is neither phonetic nor subject to set rules without exceptions, children begin with a great handicap. Most people learn to spell by seeing words and learning how they "look." It is therefore of great importance that children should read widely so that they see common words constantly and at the same time increase their vocabulary.

Children need individual help and the best guide to the amount of such help is the child's own written work. It is, of course, important to approach the matter in a way that will help the child to maintain and build up his confidence.

Casual word lists can confuse a child. F. J. Schonell, in *Essentials in Teaching and Testing Spelling* (Macmillan), has drawn up a list of 3200 words which should be spelt by a normal child of thirteen years. These words, the choice of which is based on word frequency, are grouped according to common structural elements, and the grading is based on child usage. Local words, and words of special importance will, naturally, supplement the list. The words are grouped in small units which can be learned as the teacher wishes, according to her estimate of the ability of her class. There is therefore no waste of time over learning the spelling of words that will be seldom used. It should, however, be noted that the child's spelling and reading vocabularies are two very different matters.

Oral drill, in moderation, up to the age of nine, can be useful, because the use of rhythm and repetition is psychologically sound, and children love to repeat the familiar. Such repetition must be supplemented by individual attention. It is best to ask the children to learn only a few words at a time because they get such satisfaction out of a small task perfectly accomplished.

As time goes on it is possible to develop in the children an analytic and synthetic attitude towards the spelling of words.

It sometimes happens that a child's visual and auditory memory is poor; it will then be necessary to make use of articulatory (accurate pronunciation) and grapho-motor impressions. These latter impressions will also help to fix correct spellings for normal children.

It is essential to capture the children's interest in the work and therefore it should be linked with some play activity: spelling bees, jumbled letters, crosswords, forming other words from the letters of a given word, dictionary exercises, etc., are all useful. Class revision can be done with the pupils working in pairs. There should be frequent revision of the words learned and each child should have a small book in which he can record corrections and new words alphabetically.

Burt's and Schonell's spelling tests are very useful because they help to diagnose errors.

Dictation is of no value for teaching spelling, but it can test it, and teaches the children to

listen carefully. Casually chosen passages are not good for the children. Schonell has gathered together a number of graded passages for dictation and these form a useful set of tests.

### *Writing*

We should aim at teaching children writing that is easy and pleasant to read, and which at the same time is produced easily and at reasonable speed.

The practice of teaching script writing in the Infant school is justified because it is similar in form to the printing children see in their reading books and it would be foolish for them to learn to write in one form and read in another.

The time for changing from script (assuming that a change is necessary) to cursive writing is undecided, some teachers making the change at seven years and others at nine or ten years. One thing seems certain, and that is that the child should write script with pleasure, ease and mastery, firmly and beautifully, before changing over.

Style is not of great importance as long as the letters are rounded and reasonably upright and derived from script. There should be no unnecessary hair strokes or rules about all letters being joined.

Pencils and pens are not easily held and children should gain a certain degree of muscular control before they are expected to write really well.

The age of change-over to ink will vary with individuals, but pencils should be used for free expression work right up to the end of the Junior period.

There is an artistic side to writing which cannot be neglected. Marion Richardson's writing and patterns will interest all teachers, while artistic lettering and MS. writing should play a part in all art schemes. The deterioration in children's writing after the secondary school stage seems to indicate that there is something fundamentally wrong with our writing and that it cannot stand up to use. It is certainly a subject upon which research is urgently needed. The teaching of writing must never become a drudgery. When children feel that the material they are writing is purposeful and worth-while,

they will do their best work without outside pressure.

### *Grammar*

Formal grammar for its own sake has no place in the Junior school, for not only is it dull and uninteresting to the children, but it can obscure the idea of English as a living and growing language.

In the upper forms of the Junior School a few necessary and fundamental terms like noun, adjective, and verb should be introduced and reference should be made to the function of a word, phrase, or clause in a sentence. Other incidental work should be dealt with as it arises. Visual methods should be called on, and understanding of the structure of language should be linked with its usefulness in the craft of writing.

Carefully selected passages which illustrate certain points can be given to the children and the point underlined by a series of questions.

### *Literature (Prose)*

There is such an immense range of material available that it is quite impossible to define the work to be covered. Everything will depend upon the taste of the teacher and her own delight in books. If she is enthusiastic about the subject her enthusiasm will be communicated to her pupils.

It is of prime importance that the children's reading should be wide and varied, and therefore they must have a wide range of books at their disposal. School and class libraries will help to establish the important habits of using a library and reading books. Teachers will be wise to start from what the children enjoy and should gradually wean them from their "comics" to worth-while books.

Children's reading should not only increase their vocabulary and stimulate their imagination, but should enrich their experience of life and, through stories, should introduce them unconsciously to a moral code which will form a solid basis for future social behaviour.

The teacher should read suitable books aloud, regularly, to the children.

One of the main aims should be to see that the children get real enjoyment out of their reading. It is to be hoped that the time has passed when an intensive study of literature induced in children a real hatred for it.

### *Poetry*

Young children enjoy the regular rhythm of verse and take a great delight in repeating it.

The choice of poem depends upon the teacher and she should see that the child hears the best available for his particular stage of development. Cheap sentiment, banal narrative, and sententious moralizing should be strictly excluded.

When a new poem is introduced to the children it should be read aloud by the teacher so that the children will get a good first impression and will wish to repeat it themselves. Difficult words and phrases should be explained incidentally very briefly. Properly introduced poetry will develop in the children a growing delicacy of ear, mind, and emotions.

Choral speaking, with its emphasis on articulation, rhythm, and enjoyment, can be excellent as long as the style is not imposed by the teacher. Such speaking should develop from the common thoughts and feelings of the class and teacher working together.

Each child should be encouraged to copy the poems he likes best into his own anthology, which with guidance and inspiration, will be beautifully written and illustrated.

Performance of individual recitations and choral speech should be given to the rest of the children in the school.

The writing of verse by children has been successfully accomplished in some schools and should be encouraged, since it leads to an understanding of such things as metre, rhyme, and stanza. Poems written by the children should appear in the class or school magazine.

### *Music*

Music, from the earliest stages, should be allied to dancing, marching, and rhythmical movement, and at all times there should be plenty of fun tempered by that discipline which true enjoyment brings.

The children should learn songs by ear long

before any scales or technical explanations are given. Through these songs they will learn unconsciously about such things as tone, rhythm, time, unity of attack, breath-control and range of voice.

The songs chosen should have a wide variety of style and subject, should be the best of their kind and attractive to children. Folk songs and nursery rhymes and the loved and familiar melodies of the great composers are excellent for this purpose. The trivial, sentimental, and commonplace should be rigidly excluded, while the good music should become a precious permanent possession of each child.

Songs should be sung repeatedly both formally and informally, with and without the piano. If the children sing them spontaneously the teacher will know that her teaching has been successful.

The Percussion Band is invaluable, for not only do the children enjoy it, but it can lead to a later interest in orchestral work. Violins, fiddles, and recorders can all be used profitably at the Junior stage.

After sufficient oral experience all children should learn to read music fluently. Lengthy lessons in musical theory are not necessary. Such theory as is desirable can be taught incidentally from the songs already learned.

Learning to listen is vitally important, for good listeners gain immense pleasure out of listening to good musical performances. Direct instruction in musical appreciation should be slight and casual and children should not be expected to listen for too long at one time.

Broadcast lessons can provide inspiration and new ideas and excellent musical performances. Quite often music is of great value to backward children, for if they are good performers they get that feeling of accomplishment which they so much need. Children can, and do, get a great deal of pleasure out of writing their own tunes.

### *Nature Study*

In nature study we are able to take advantage of the children's insatiable curiosity. If the syllabus is drawn up in broad outline only, we can attempt to direct the children's observations into profitable channels, and in answering

their questions seek to make things clear in their minds and encourage their natural capacity for classification.

The country child has the advantage of being able to study easily such things as farms, animals, fields, hedgerows, gardens, and wild plants. The town child can also, in a restricted way, study trees, gardens, plants, and birds, and he is able to keep insects and fish. All children should keep plant tables and weather, wind, and nature charts, and all children should be given, at some time, the opportunity of seeing something of the life of the seashore, the sea, and the sky.

We should think here of the child as the adventurer, collector, and questioner, while the teacher should be there to inspire, encourage, and explain.

There will be many opportunities for group excursions and each child should be encouraged to make some personal discovery which he can expound to the others. It is important that each child should have a book in which he can record his discoveries and observations.

### *Geography*

A knowledge of the home area is essential for children because upon this concrete knowledge they can base sound geographical conceptions. They can acquire this knowledge by means of excursions and explorations and talks by local people.

All children should help in keeping suitable weather, wind, temperature, and rainfall charts.

Alongside this local study they should be given some knowledge and understanding of other lands. Pictures, films, books of travel and adventure, and talks by travellers are of great importance here.

The understanding of maps is fundamental to all this work. Fortunately, most children love maps and are eager to understand them. The making of simple maps of the classroom, the school, and the district gives some idea of scale and the importance of accurate measurement.

Large-scale ordnance maps of the district should be in all schools and familiar details on the map should be related to excursions and walks. All the older children should have an

atlas over which they can browse quite freely, and use in placing current events. In time they should understand the conventional signs and be able to use the index.

The Globe should be familiar to children and available for the teacher at all times for illustrating the lessons.

Towards the end of the Junior School the local studies will have extended to a study of the whole of Great Britain.

### *History*

History should give the children a sense of values about people and things, and because of this any scheme of work must be based on a solid foundation of sound moral principles.

Stories, discussions, and active investigation should occupy a major part in the course.

Because there is such an immense amount of material available, the selection of topics has to be made with great care, otherwise there is a real danger of the children acquiring an unorganized jumble of historical ideas. To make things more difficult, the Junior School child, especially in the lower forms, has little conception of time relations. The use of time lines helps here.

From our rich national store of stories those of most value for our immediate purpose are the ones which tell of actions carried out because they are right or necessary, for this arouses sympathy and admiration. Such stories should also show a variety of characters and should deal with all ages, countries, and social classes. Stories can be read or told, dramatized and discussed. Suitable illustrations are, of course, essential.

There are certain fundamental needs of life the world over and by starting from the present time it is possible to direct the child's interest towards these. Centres of interest or group and individual projects built around such subjects as sea and land transport, communications, food, clothing, shelter, and health are all well-tried devices, where history and geography meet. Local investigations are also of great value.

Class textbooks can kill interest and enjoyment if they are used for the valueless drudgery

of learning facts by heart, but all books that can be read with enjoyment and used for reference are excellent, and the children must learn to use them. Films, broadcasting, and drama can be invaluable in history teaching.

### *Religious Instruction*

There is no doubt that children of school age often wonder about such problems as the meaning of good and evil, and while respecting their private thoughts, teachers should set out to try and answer some of these questionings.

Lessons should take place in an atmosphere of mutual confidence and the teacher should not moralize or instruct, but discuss freely the simple but fundamental problems of religious and moral life. Ideally such lessons should be conducted by specialist teachers who have deep religious convictions and who have been specially trained.

This kind of teaching helps in the development of character so that the child will be fitted to meet the chances and crises of life.

Religious Instruction can only be successful if the life of the school is sound. The morning assembly should set the tone for the whole day, and this should be sustained by the attitude of the teachers.

As such, Religious Instruction has its place and all children should be familiar with Bible and missionary stories, and the lives of great men and women. Each child should possess a Children's Bible with reasonably sized print and many pictures.

Most education authorities issue an "Agreed Syllabus of Religious Instruction" and this will be found of great assistance in supplementing the teacher's personal approach.

The traditional placing of Religious Instruction as the first lesson of the morning has drawbacks because of the constant interruptions. Many schools now give this instruction at other times during the day.

### *Project Work*

The value of the Project Method in proper hands can no longer be doubted since so many schools have proved in practice that it works.

Basically sound because it is founded on the child's natural curiosity and desire to make things and be active, it is not only immediately stimulating but develops in the child independence of thought and action, and a lively fearlessness which consciously or unconsciously tend to be suppressed by the old class teaching methods.

If a school is changing over to the Project Method, then there will have to be a period of transition when the children and staff can adjust themselves to the new conditions. If a single class teacher in a school run on traditional lines wishes to use the method, her work will, obviously, be made much more difficult.

In the transition period topics or centres of interest will have to be suggested by the teacher and she will probably have to suggest the general direction the topic shall take. But as time goes on and the children gain more in initiative and confidence they will suggest developments themselves, and these particular lines of inquiry should be followed up in preference to those laid down by the teacher. The teacher then retires into the background, but is always available to help when necessary.

Topics to study can arise out of current events or visits, school journeys, and camps. In developing topics the teacher will unobtrusively observe the reactions of individual children so that she can encourage the timid and see that all children are brought in. In the lower forms of a Junior School two or three shops set up in the classroom will provide stimulating activity work for a considerable time; the work may for a time all be centred on the shops, or lessons can be related to a limited period spent in "activity" work.

In the preliminary stages of such activity a Junior child's interest will burn at fever heat, but it is liable to evaporate quite as rapidly. It is then the teacher's task to either blow up the smouldering embers of interest or indicate some new line of inquiry.

It is absolutely essential that the teacher should begin with some general plan such as shown on page 20.

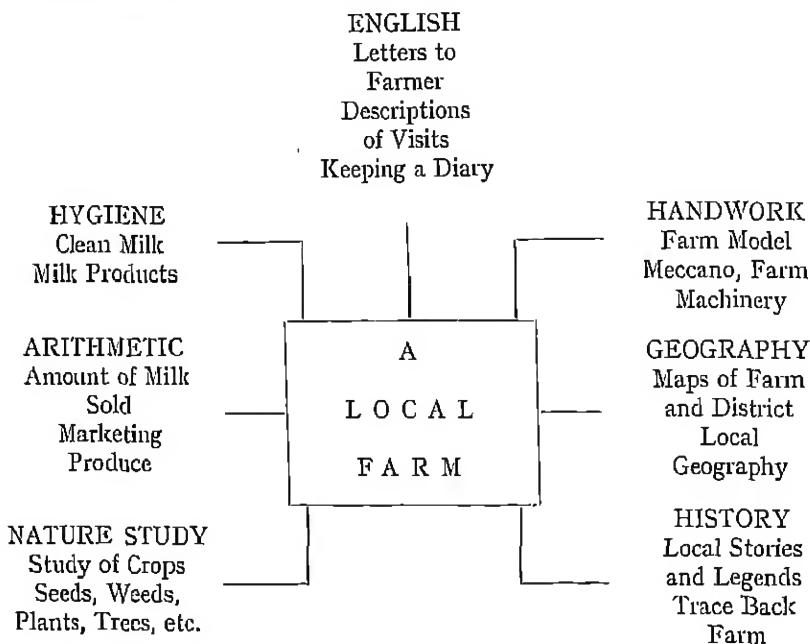
As this plan becomes modified the teacher should record the work covered either weekly or monthly. The children, too, should be

encouraged to keep notebooks recording the work they have accomplished. The great importance of these careful records is that the teacher is able to see where certain deficiencies in the children's background have to be filled. Provision will have to be made for lessons in Physical Training, Religious Instruction, Music,

These periods give the teacher a useful and interesting insight into the children's minds.

### Time-tables

Some educationists would have us scrap all school time-tables and allow the children to do



Needlework, and possibly Art and Craft. And it will certainly be necessary to arrange formal lessons in Arithmetic and English.

It is essential, of course, that schools working on the project system should have flexible time-tables, but such schools will always be aware of the danger of a lack of balance in the work. Occasional class lessons will be necessary to correlate the work of the project and these can take the form of conferences and assemblies.

It is a common experience that the project method is highly successful in improving the written and oral expression in schools, while the gain in initiative and independence is remarkable.

Many schools now include a "free choice" period in their time-tables. This is a time when the children can do what they like as long as they do not interfere with other children.

what they like when they like. In the ordinary State school under present conditions this would be quite impracticable. Our buildings are such that with only one hall, classes must use it at set times. The break periods often have to be fitted in to suit the school playground accommodation while the marking of registers, the distribution of milk, the collecting of bank and dinner money and many other things have to conform to a set time-table. In addition, the tool subjects and certain technical subjects, which must be given a set amount of time, must appear somewhere on the time-table.

A time-table is also important because it satisfies the Junior's need for security, and exercises a steady influence by making him realize that he has a part to play in an ordered community life.

At the same time, the time-table should

## THE CURRICULUM

21

## MORNING

## AFTERNOON

Class	1.30-1.35	1.35-1.45	1.45-2.15	2.15-2.50	2.50-3.0	3.0-3.30	3.30-4.0
MONDAY	1 2 3 4 5 6		Singing Needlework (Girls), Handwork and Gardening (Boys)	Physical Training		Nature Study Activity	
TUESDAY	1 2 3 4 5			Geography Activity Dancing (Girls) Physical Training (Boys) Art and Craft Practical Arithmetic	Dating (Girls) Art and Craft (Boys)	English Organized Games English Music	English Geography Activity Organized Games
WEDNESDAY	1 2 3 4 5	Registers	Art	Physical Training Needlework (Girls), Handwork and Gardening (Boys)		Interval	Free Choice of Activity by Children
THURSDAY	1 2 3 4 5			Handwork History Activity Art History Activity Art or Craft		Music	History Art or Craft History Activity Art English
FRIDAY	1 2 3 4 5		Dancing (Girls) Physical Training (Boys) English	History Activity English Dancing (Girls) Art and Craft (Boys)	Organized Games English	English Music Organized Games Geography Activity History Activity	

FIG. 3  
*Junior School Time-table*

## THE PRACTICAL JUNIOR TEACHER

never be allowed to fetter education. Its function is to serve education by indicating the most economical use of the time available.

It should never be felt that the time-table must be adhered to rigidly, it should be flexible and informal.

The analysis of the time-table is important, because it shows whether subjects are getting a fair share of the time.

The more formal time-table should show some such analysis as this—

Subject	Minutes per Week
English	560
Arithmetic	260
Religious Instruction	150
History	60
Geography	60
Nature Study	60
Music	60
Handwork	60
Art	30
Physical Training	150
Recreation	125
Registers, etc.	75
	<u>1,650</u>

The less formal school which bases its work on activity methods will divide its subjects on these lines—

Activities	Minutes per Week
Physical	250
Creative	300
Constructive	225
Environmental Studies	200
Tool Subjects	450
Break, Registers, Milk, etc.	225
	<u>1,650</u>

It is not necessary to keep strictly to these times every week, but a term's work should show roughly time in these proportions.

Where it is inevitable, such things as the collection of dinner money, bank money, and the drinking of milk should be shown on the time-table.

The old style of time-table, with its rigid insistence on keeping to set times, is gradually passing away, and in its place we are getting periods which allow scope and freedom of choice to individual teachers.

A time-table which has been successfully operated in a Junior Mixed School is given in page 21.

This school is in a transition stage, changing over to activity methods. The time-table is very flexible and the times given to each subject vary with the class and circumstances.

An analysis of the time-table for the nine to ten year old group gives—

Activity	Minutes per Week
Tool Subjects	500
Children's Free Choice	110
Environmental Studies— (Nature Study, Geography, History)	195
Religious Instruction	145
Creative Activities— (Art and Craft, Music, Needlework, Gardening)	265
Physical Activity— (P.T., Dancing, Rhythms, Activities)	210
Extraneous Activity— (Bank, Milk, Intervals, Registers)	225
	<u>1,650</u>



FIG. 4

*Saint Leonard and the Dragon, by a 10-year old Backward Boy*

## TESTS AND RECORDS

As long ago as 1920 Dr. Ballard wrote, "If we examine at all we should examine well: and to examine well is to measure accurately." He also said "We need objective measurements recognized by all as final and unassailable."

### Standardized Attainment Tests

Over a quarter of a century has gone by since those words of wisdom were written and now at last the majority of teachers has come to appreciate the possibility of replacing the old termly school examinations by standardized attainment tests.

This type of test which is objective has many advantages over the usual school examination, which is subjective. For instance, since Norms are supplied with all these tests one is able to measure the child against all children of his age group, and his place depends upon the attainments of the whole Age Group, whereas the school examination measures the child only against a small selected group—usually his own class—and his place depends on the ability of that class.

Again, the former type of test deals with the application of knowledge, whereas the latter examines only content and knowledge gained. Another advantage of the standardized test is that it does not cause the child as much emotional anxiety as an examination. Teachers find these tests invaluable for comparing their own group of children with children of all ages.

It is possible to obtain sets of standardized attainment tests in all the basic subjects, and each set of tests has a manual of instructions explaining in detail how to administer, and how to mark the test and how to compare each child's result with the Norms for his age group, i.e. how to convert a child's actual score in the test to a Standard Score.

The following tests are only a few of the excellent ones which are now available—

(a) *Moray House Arithmetic Tests and English*

*Tests*, by Professor Godfrey H. Thompson and Colleagues (University of London Press).

(b) *The Southend Test in Mechanical Arithmetic* (George G. Harrap & Co.).

(c) *Graded Spelling Test*, by Dr. Cyril Burt.

(d) *The Essential Mechanical Arithmetic Tests*, Forms A and B.

(e) *The Essential Problem Arithmetic Tests*, Forms A and B.

(f) *Graded Reading Vocabulary Tests*.

(g) *Silent Reading Test*, Forms A and B.

The four latter Tests have been devised by Dr. Fred J. Schonell, and are published by Oliver and Boyd.

By means of these tests a teacher is able to calculate a child's Reading Age, Arithmetic Age, etc., or his Standard Score in any of these subjects.

### Intelligence Tests

It is now realized that a child's general attainment at school depends largely on his intelligence, or innate intellectual endowment. We are now able to measure a child's intelligence by means of Standardized Tests and so to compare him with other children of his Age Group.

One of the most reliable and accurate methods of measuring intelligence is by means of an individual test, and one widely used at the present time is the *New Revised Stanford-Binet Individual Tests of Intelligence*, by Lewis M. Terman and Maud A. Merrill. The Handbook, Record Forms, and Test Materials required for these are obtainable from George G. Harrap & Co.

It must be stressed that these Tests should be administered by someone who has received special training, and it is to be hoped that in the near future at least one member of the staff of every Junior School will be qualified to give these Tests and that her services will be used in such a way that every child is tested once or possibly twice during his Junior School career.

The first time should be as soon as he has settled happily into the school. The result of this test will be a useful guide in planning his work and knowing what to expect of him. If a second test could be given during the child's last year in the Junior School, it would provide the Secondary School with useful information.

Most County Education Authorities now have on their staff a psychologist who may be called upon by Head Teachers to test children who present special difficulties. Unfortunately these psychologists have not the time to test every child in every school in their district.

In the circumstances teachers at present have to rely on Group Tests of Intelligence, which although not always absolutely reliable and accurate do give a very good idea of a child's intelligence.

The following are a few of the Group Intelligence Tests, which may be found useful by teachers of Junior children. These can be easily administered provided a careful study of the Handbook is made first.

(a) *The Moray House Intelligence Tests*, by Professor Godfrey H. Thompson & Colleagues (University of London Press).

(b) *Cattell Intelligence Tests*, Scale I (Harrap).

(c) *Sleight's Non-Verbal Intelligence Test* (Harrap).

By means of these Tests one is able to calculate a child's Mental Age, and by dividing this by his Chronological Age and multiplying the answer by 100 one arrives at his Intelligence Quotient. This forms an invaluable guide as to what one may expect of him in his school work.

By means of the Standardized Attainment Tests mentioned previously one is able to assess a child's Arithmetic Age and Quotient, or his Reading Age and Quotient, etc., and if there is a wide discrepancy between either of these and his Intelligence Quotient it probably means either that the child is not applying himself to that particular subject, or else that he is experiencing some special difficulty which must be diagnosed.

### *Diagnostic Tests*

It sometimes happens that children of normal or above normal intelligence seem to

be dull in one or other of the basic subjects. It may well be that their weakness arises from some specific backwardness due to an undiscovered difficulty of comprehension.

The practical means of diagnosing the causes and characteristics of children's difficulties and disabilities in Reading, Spelling and Oral and Written English are dealt with by Dr. Schonell in his book *Backwardness in the Basic Subjects*.

He has also constructed a set of Diagnostic Arithmetic Tests intended to reveal weaknesses in the fundamental processes in Arithmetic. The accompanying Handbook to these Tests is called *Diagnosis of Individual Difficulties in Arithmetic* (Test Forms and Book, Oliver and Boyd).

### *Performance Scale*

Dr. W. P. Alexander has devised and standardized a battery of tests for measuring practical ability as distinct from academic or verbal ability. These Tests are suitable for use with pupils between the ages of eight and eighteen (Material, Score Sheets, and Handbook of Instructions necessary for administering these Tests are published by Nelson).

It should be noted that the results of any standardized objective tests are for teachers' reference only and in no circumstances should they be communicated to the children.

### *Other School Tests*

As was stated at the beginning of this section the present aim in Junior Schools tends towards replacing the usual termly examinations as far as possible by standardized objective tests in the basic subjects. It is suggested that Tests in other subjects, such as History, Geography, Nature Study, Music, Art, etc., need not be considered essential in a Junior School. Occasionally a short test, requiring one word answers only, might be given by a teacher who was not sure if she was achieving all that she had hoped with her class, but generally speaking, time is too precious to be given to continual testing, which serves no useful purpose to the children themselves, but tends only to discourage the weak and mediocre ones. At all costs comparison of marks should be avoided.

*Pupils' Record Cards*

The cumulative Record Card is devised to present in a convenient form the results of a series of independent assessments, and should eventually provide a complete history of the child throughout his school career.

School Record Cards are still really only at the experimental stage, although they have been in use in some schools for several years.

There are many types of these cards in use at the present time. Several Educational Authorities have evolved their own, such as the well-known Hertfordshire or Wiltshire cards. In 1942 Dr. C. M. Fleming of the University of London Institute of Education brought out a card, and The National Foundation of Educational Research has drawn up a confidential school record card, which is being tried out in many schools.

All these cards are based on the same principles and they set out to give as complete a picture as possible of the child, his background, disposition, school life, attainments, aptitude, etc. As a general rule such a card has sections dealing with the following aspects of the child—

Home circumstances.

Physical condition.

School attendance.

Temperament.

Interests.

Attainment.

Result of Objective Tests.

Each section should be filled in at the end of each school year by the child's Class Teacher, which means that during his Junior School Life, there should be four sets of entries under each heading on his card. Teachers are asked to record findings based upon careful personal observation, and the use of objective test material as far as possible.

With most types of cards it is suggested that assessment of the child under the various headings should wherever possible be made in terms of a five-point scale. In most cases the

five categories would be interpreted in percentages as follows—

E	D	C	B	A
2	23	50	23	2

*A* will be taken to correspond to the performance of the top two out of a hundred representative pupils. *B* will correspond to the performance of the next 23, and so on.

At the present time there seems to be some doubt among teachers as to the standard on which they should base their assessments.

The instructions with some sets of cards are that a teacher must take into account his *whole* experience of children extending over other years and other schools when assessing a pupil, and in this light category *E* would apply to the bottom two children of a representative group of 100. Therefore in a group of 50 backward children it would be possible to find 10 children assessed as *E*, 30 as *D*, and 10 as *C*, with no *A*'s nor *B*'s. Conversely in a small class of bright children receiving much individual attention one might find, out of a group of 20, that 7 would be *A*, 12 *B*, and only 1 *C*.

In other cases the teacher is asked to judge only within her own group, so that in a class of 50 she would place the top child as *A*, the bottom one as *E*, the middle 25 would be *C*, with either 11 or 12 each as *B* and *D*.

The latter method is comparatively easy for an inexperienced teacher, but is of little use for comparison with children of other classes and schools. On the other hand, it is almost impossible for a young inexperienced teacher or one who has been in only one particular school to base his assessments on a 100 representative pupils. This argument serves to prove the absolute necessity of using standardized tests wherever possible as a guide when filling in the entries dealing with a child's attainment.

The following table is a useful guide for converting Arithmetic, Reading, and English Quotients or Percentiles to a five-point scale.

Percentiles	E	D	C	B	A
Percentiles	2	25	75	98	100
Quotients	Below 80	80-94	95-105	106-120	Above 120

## SHERRARDSWOOD SCHOOL

WELWYN GARDEN CITY

## CONFIDENTIAL RECORD CARD

Name *Mary Smith* Sex *F.*  
 Date of Birth *5.8.1942* Child's Position in Family (see notes) *2/2*  
 Name of Parent (or Guardian) *Henry Smith*  
 Occupation *Engineer*  
 Address 1. *4 High Street, Bridgeworth*  
 2. *1 The Avenue, Welwyn*  
 3.  
 Nursery School or Class  
 School 1. *Bridgeworth Infant School. September 1947-July 1949*  
 2. *Sherrardswood School. September 1949—*  
 3.  
 Home Circumstances:  
 Material, B.  
 Physical, B.  
 Psychological, D. (Parents separated)

## ATTENDANCE

	Year Ending	No. of attendances	Reasons for any long absence
1	July 1948	336	Feb. 2nd-28th. Mumps
2	July 1949	350	
3	July 1950	348	
4	July 19		
5	July 19		
6	July 19		

## School

## INFANT STAGE

## Estimate of Attainment at End of Infant Stage

Speech	
Reading	
Number	
General Activities	

Notes on any Special Physical Condition (with dates):—

Final Report on transfer to Junior Stage:—

By courtesy of

Date of transfer to Junior Stage.

Hertfordshire County Council

FIG. 5

Pupil's Record Card

JUNIOR STAGE  
Teacher's Estimate of Attainment

	Grade	Oral Reading	Reading	Spoken English	Written English	Arith. Mechanical	Arith. Problem	Art and Craft	
1st Year . . .	Form I	B .	C .	B	C	B	C	C	
2nd " . . .									
3rd " . . .									
4th " . . .									

## Objective Tests (Name and Result)

Name	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year
Terman & Merrill Revision of Binet Test	Intelligence Quotient October 119 1949			
Graded Vocabulary Test Schonell	Reading Quotient March 115 1950			
Mechanical Arithmetic Test Schonell	Arithmetic Quotient June 120 1951			

## Notes on any Special Physical Condition:—

Slight deafness due to mastoid operation in March 1947

CHILD'S ATTRIBUTES AND INTERESTS  
(Note: All entries should be dated.)

Hobbies and Interests . . .	Pets—rabbits and white mice. Gang play in the woods. (July 1950)
Home Reading . . .	Euid Blyton Books—Comics. (July 1950)
Membership of Other Organizations . . .	Brownies. Sunday School. (July 1950)
Concentration and Persistence . . .	B. Mary always finishes tasks which she has undertaken. (July 1950)
Initiative . . .	B. She has many original ideas. Often takes the lead in dramatics
Personal Habits . . .	Clean, tidy and punctual. (July 1950)
Ability and Interest in Games . . .	Average ability. Not very quick. (July 1950)
Other Comments . . .	A very affectionate child. Craves attention from both adults and other children. (July 1950)

## Report at the End of the Junior Stage:—

Secondary School . . . . .

Date

FIG. 6

Pupil's Record Card (cont.)

Until a universally recognized standardized method of assessing pupils for these records has been evolved it will be impossible to make the fullest use of the School Confidential Record Card.

When a child moves from one school to another his School Record Card should be transferred from his first Head Teacher to his new one, and should supply the staff of his new school with a tremendous amount of invaluable information, which in all probability would have taken them several years to find out for themselves. If these two schools have been in the habit of assessing their pupils by different methods, the Record Card may convey a very misleading impression of the child to his new teachers.

### *Examinations*

The selective examination at the end of a child's Junior School career has tended in the past to dominate the whole curriculum, with the result that in some schools, education in its true sense has had to be abandoned in favour of continual practice in the basic subjects.

Enlightened educationists have realized this, and now every effort is being made to find a satisfactory way of selecting Junior School children for Grammar, Technical, or Secondary Modern Schools without having to rely on the usual examination in Arithmetic, English and General Intelligence at the age of 11 years.

Many local Education Authorities are planning in the future to base their selection of children for the three types of Secondary Schools on a standardized type of cumulative Record Card which will provide a complete survey of the child's development in all spheres—physical, intellectual and social, over a period of six years.

In this way the type of his future education would be decided by his potentialities instead of by his attainments in the basic subjects, and he would then have the chance of receiving the education best suited to his interests and intellectual ability. Thus the temptation for teachers in Junior Schools to over-emphasize the basic subjects of the curriculum would be eliminated.

### *Records of Children's Work*

Most teachers feel the need for recording the ground which is being covered by the children in the various subjects. The present tendency is towards introducing individual work where the classes are small, or group work with large classes. The teacher therefore must devise a method of recording the stages covered by each child in Reading, English, and Arithmetic, so that she can tell at a glance what work he is ready for next. The following are a few suggested methods of recording children's progress.

### *Reading*

Each child would have a strip of stiff card about 6 in. by 2 in. suitable for use as a book marker. His name should be written clearly at the top and the card divided into two columns headed, "Date" and "Pages Read." When the teacher has heard the individual or group of children read to her, the appropriate entries should be made on the cards and checked by her. In the case of Library Books or supplementary readers, each child could be responsible for making his own entries on another similar card to be kept in the book which he is reading at the time. He should keep a page at the back of his English Exercise book or else have a special notebook in which to record the title of each book as it is read, and if possible a comment on the book.

Another way of keeping Reading Records would be for the teacher to have an exercise book of squared paper with a list of the children's names down the left-hand side, and the dates written across the top of the columns. She would then record beside a child's name and under the appropriate date heading the number of the last page read to her. It would also be useful every few weeks to give her own rough assessment on a 5 point scale of each child's reading ability and to record this in the book. It would be most useful to refer to quickly when in doubt as to whether a child's reading ability was really improving. Whenever a standardized reading test is given the results should be recorded in the book as well as on the children's Record Cards.

*Arithmetic*

In cases where the children work on individual lines teachers often prefer to use graded cards, of sums instead of the usual textbooks. In this case, the cards should be placed in a series of wall pockets, one set in each pocket (e.g. 1 dozen cards each with 6 simple addition sums in the first pocket, 1 dozen cards each with 4 problems involving simple addition in the second pocket). Similar sets of cards involving simple subtraction would be in the third and fourth pockets, and so on.

A name card should be made for each child (similar to the ones mentioned above for Reading) and be kept in the pocket containing the cards of sums on which the child is working or else in a special slot made at the back of his Arithmetic Exercise Book. He would enter on his name card the index number of the sum card when completed and the date.

When, in the teacher's opinion, the child has had sufficient practice and mastered a certain type of sum, he would move his card into the next pocket or rule a coloured line under the last entry on his name card. He would then have either a group or individual lesson by the teacher, or a more advanced pupil on the new kind of sum and would then proceed to work from the cards in the next pocket.

A teacher using this method must not omit to keep her own records of any practical work and experience in Arithmetic undertaken by the children individually or in groups such as—shopping, weighing, measuring liquids or distances, telling the time, etc.

Another method of recording work done by the children would be to use another page in the book of squared paper already referred to in connection with Reading Records, and to indicate the various stages to be covered along the top of the columns and then to mark off the squares against the child's name and under the appropriate columns as each stage is mastered.

Too much attention should not be drawn to children's varying rates of progress since the slow ones might tend to become discouraged.

Again, results of standardized Arithmetic Tests should be recorded in this book as well as on the Record Cards.

Often children in the upper classes of the Junior School like to keep their own records of progress on the back page of their Arithmetic Exercise Books. This should be encouraged and also they should be taught how to keep a graph of their own marks to encourage them to keep a high standard of work at whatever stage they may be.

*English*

This is a more difficult subject in which to record progress as style and verbal ability cannot be graded or measured objectively. One could, however, use graded sets of cards dealing with sentence construction and grammar, and these could be set out in wall pockets and name cards used for the record of progress as in the case of Arithmetic.

Again, another page in the teacher's record book could be used with the index numbers of the cards, or the page numbers of a standard English textbook entered at the top of each column, and the space against each child's name marked off as each stage is passed.

Here again the older children should be encouraged to make graphs to show the teacher's assessment of their work and to encourage them to improve their own standards.

*Other Subjects*

In most other subjects it is almost impossible to keep adequate records of individual children's work. In History and Geography or with a Centre of Interest, the teacher should keep a record of the work done by the class as a whole, noting any special effort made by a group or an individual. For instance if a child, on his own initiative went to the local library to get a book and look up information on the subject that was being studied by the class, this fact should certainly be recorded. Or if a group of children get together to construct a model or stock an aquarium or produce a magazine, it would be worthy of mention in the teacher's record book, and would be of great help to her when filling in the entries on the Cumulative Record Cards as she would have definite examples of children's interests and initiative to guide her.

## THE INTEGRATION OF THE CURRICULUM

*"We have seen that the key to the reorientation of the curriculum is the education of the child in his social inheritance, which can alone give him the roots of national and international citizenship. We have seen that by this education, human motive is integrated with knowledge, and that social and civic education is the vital core of the education of the child."*

**I**N simple terms this rather forbidding title stands for the attempt to do away with the artificial barriers between subjects, so that the whole field of school work is unified. In the past we have arranged our day's work so that a lesson on one "subject" is followed by a lesson on another "subject." We did not stop to consider the child's outlook on this rather arbitrary method of giving him his daily dose of knowledge. The accent in modern education is quite rightly on the child and his point of view, and if we look at the question from the child's angle we shall realize that nothing could be more confusing, more unreal, than this abrupt transition from one branch of knowledge to another. At one moment he is listening entranced to a history or Scripture story, or he is absorbed in making a model of a railway station. Then at the sound of a bell he is torn away from this happy activity and plunged into the very different activities of geography or arithmetic. He is bewildered and rather resentful and so his geography and arithmetic suffer. No one would suggest that he should spend all his time in school doing only what he likes, or that he himself should be the judge of the activity he should pursue. He has to realize that he is not the only child in the class and that there are probably thirty-nine other children who want to do something he may not like. What is wrong is that the day should be divided into watertight compartments so that no overlapping of work or interests is possible.

It is interesting to compare a time-table in a school which still works on "subject" lines with one from a school where an attempt has been made to free the school day from rigidity. (See Figs. 2 and 3, on pages 21 and 37, and the analysis on page 36.)

The time-tables given are not based on any particular school, but merely try to show the difference between a rigid and a flexible use of

school time. It may appear that too little time—330 minutes—has been given to practice in tool subjects as compared with the 405 minutes of activity work, but it must be borne in mind that activity work includes the use of basic skills and the children will be practising these skills while they are engaged in their projects and activities.

It is important to remember that the time-table of each school is dependent on that school's environment, on its accommodation, and on its special opportunities. Times for the use of the Hall and Playing Fields must be fixed and this limits in practice the free selection of periods for Physical Training, Games, Dancing, and Dramatic work.

### Methods

Having agreed that our curriculum needs integration, we must consider methods. How are we to achieve our aim without neglecting the basic knowledge that it is our duty to teach?

In the Infant Schools the difficulty has not been apparent, for the time has been planned with a regard for the way in which young children become absorbed in their occupations. This careful planning of the day's work around "interests" should follow the child into the first year of the Junior School, for although he is anxious to prove himself worthy of the harder tasks he expects and hopes for, he is not ready for an abrupt change from the informality of the Infant School to the more formal work imposed upon him by some Junior School teachers.

Let the change be gradual, but in planning be sure that the first year's work is not a mere repetition of the previous year in the Infant School. We must look for higher standards of work and for some increase in self-reliance,

self-discipline, and co-operation. In number (is there any reason why we should call it arithmetic in the Junior School?) we shall be wise to continue with lessons that give real experiences. The shop, the post office, the railway station, the bus journey—all these real life activities can be brought naturally into the teaching of number and should indeed form the basis of our work. As we gradually introduce transactions, coins, weights and measures that are more advanced, the children learn with no sense of strain and without that feeling of bewilderment that so often in the past accompanied the attempts to master arithmetic.

English work in the first Junior year can be dealt with in a similar way, with the emphasis on oral work. It is more natural to speak than to write and although we shall not neglect to train in the ability to handle pencil or pen, it would be a mistake to look for fluent written composition at this early stage.

Reading will, of course, need continual practice. If we use methods of teaching with which the child is familiar, if we have a variety of books, and if we refuse to regard the teaching of reading as a necessary drudgery, then we shall be more likely to encourage an eager, receptive attitude to this most important of all accomplishments.

The wise teacher will hasten slowly; he will look for the developing ability of the child to come to terms with his environment rather than for the ability to take in and give out factual knowledge. Throughout his school life, and especially during the Junior School years, the child is being educated by his immediate surroundings and the school is only a part of his environment.

### Correlation

It has long been recognized that young children should not be expected to think of one subject of the time-table as standing by itself, having no connection with any other subject, and attempts have been made to correlate where possible. For example, art and handwork are obvious examples of correlation. A child who is making a booklet in his handwork lessons

will naturally expect to decorate the cover. Geography and history cannot be separated and biology has links with geography.

Correlation has been tried, but does it go far enough? Is it not just as unreal to join two "subjects" together as it is to deal with them singly? What we need is a method which will clear away artificiality from our curriculum, so that we are not dealing with "subjects" but with reality, as the child knows and understands it. There are two methods now being practised in the schools which will repay examination and discussion.

### *The Project Method*

The first is the Project method. As most teachers are aware, the method involves taking a topic and finding out as much as possible about it, disregarding any "subject" barriers. The fields into which the inquiry strays may be limited or unlimited at the discretion of the leader. Similarly there may be a set time for the project to run or the leader may allow the work to go on for as long as he judges it to be useful. The topic, or centre of interest, should arise naturally out of the work being done in class in the normal way. For example, if the children were learning the geography of the British Isles, it would be inevitable that they would deal, in a simple way, with the topic of how the people are fed. The wise teacher will base his work here on the child's actual experience and the general question might be, "What do we have for breakfast?" Although answers would vary, depending on the environment of the school, certain common foodstuffs would be brought into the discussion and we should finally emerge with a centre of interest which might have the title "Our breakfast foods" or "What we have for breakfast"—or some other meal. Each one of the foods—milk, butter, margarine, bread, tea, etc., would furnish enough material for a project, but it is wiser on the whole to give a certain breadth to the scheme.

There is no difficulty in finding ideas for projects: the children by their questions and comments will furnish plenty of material. There is difficulty, however, in deciding which idea will lead to the working out of a successful

## THE PRACTICAL JUNIOR TEACHER

project. The theme or subject must be capable of development and should lend itself to a variety of activities. As an example we will take as a centre of interest "The House In Which I Live." In the course of general knowledge talks, or in geography or history lessons, the question of homes is bound to crop up sooner or later. The natural way of beginning the project is to encourage the children to talk about their homes and so let the idea spread. Set aside a period when a start will be made. There are two ways in which the work can be arranged. In the first the tasks are given to separate groups, so that one group may be working on the History of houses, another on houses in other lands, a third on the services—gas, water, electricity, and so on. The other, and probably the better, way is for the whole class to deal with one aspect at a time. If, for example, the topic was the history of the house, small groups would each work on a different period and the work might be arranged as follows—

### THE HISTORY OF THE HOUSE

(Class of 40 children).

Group A : Lake and cave dwellings.

Group B : Saxon dwellings.

Group C : Norman dwellings.

Group D : The Tudor house.

Group E : The Eighteenth Century : Georgian houses.

Group F : Houses of to-day.

This would give six or seven children to each group; other groupings and different topics could, of course, be arranged.

A similar scheme would cover the geographical aspect—"Homes in other Lands." By this method each child is responsible for a whole piece of work which he can see as part of a complete plan.

In project work there is no need to drag in subjects in order to cover the whole curriculum. This gives a false idea of the aim, which is to provide a natural co-ordination of various aspects of school work.

### *The Need for Preparation*

Much careful preparation is necessary before the teacher can be sure that the scheme he has

in mind will run smoothly. This preparation is essential, even if the plan is altered as the project develops. If the children show a lively interest (and if they do not the project has failed) it will be inevitable that they should suggest lines of development that are not in the teacher's original plan. Allowance must be made for this, though at the same time the broad outline must be kept in mind.

The work might be prepared on lines similar to the following (supposing the project to be "The House I Live In").

### I. THE CENTRE OF INTEREST AND ITS PROBABLE LINES OF DEVELOPMENT.

My Own House.

Houses of Other Lands.

Houses of Other Days.

Famous Houses.

Inside My House.

The Garden.

Building a House.

(Other topics will suggest themselves to individual teachers. The environment of the school will play an important part in deciding the topics.)

### 2. THE "SUBJECTS" COVERED, THE AMOUNT OF WORK IN EACH SUBJECT, AND THE STAGE TO WHICH EACH IS DEVELOPED.

#### HISTORY

The history of houses at certain periods. The work would provide a broad survey of social conditions at these periods and would link up effectively the past with the present when the child compares his own house with those at various periods. Beware of too much detail at this stage.

#### GEOGRAPHY

Houses in other lands. The area chosen should allow of comparison. The aim would be to give a broad outline of the physical and climatic conditions which control the ways of life of people in certain parts of the world.

#### ARITHMETIC

A great variety of work in measuring is possible and most of the work usually found in

the Junior School syllabus can be included. Area and costs will occupy a large part of the time.

#### SCIENCE

The working of simple household appliances and some simple examination of the water, gas, and electricity services.

#### NATURE

The garden will provide the starting place for much interesting work in nature study—trees, shrubs, flowers, seasonal changes, birds and animals, etc.

#### ART AND HANDWORK

Making and painting houses in the History and Geography sections of the project: pictures to illustrate stories: making a large classroom house, designing and making furniture, wallpaper, etc.: covering booklets and decorating covers.

#### ENGLISH (written)

Stories about houses: well-known houses: exercises based on child's own house—"The House I would like to live in," etc. Letters written to firms (gas or electricity undertakings, builders, etc.).

#### ENGLISH (oral)

Talks, lecturettes, plays (based on history of famous houses).

The above, then, gives a rough outline of the sort of summary a teacher might prepare in order that he should know what real knowledge is to be expected from the project; it would, of course, be more detailed and would depend on the environment of the school and the opportunities offered by the teacher's own interests, and it might, to some extent, be limited by accommodation and equipment.

#### 3. CLASS GROUPINGS

Careful grouping of the children is essential. Each group should include a child with initiative and some power of leadership and there should be a judicious blending of ability of every kind.

#### 4. MATERIALS TO BE USED

The main point to be remembered is that it is useless to attempt a job requiring certain materials if those materials are not available. It is helpful to know what the school can provide and it is very probable that the children will bring much that can be utilized.

#### 5. PLANNING THE TIME

Unless definite periods are set apart for the project, it will tend to become formless and scrappy. The amount of time each week will depend on the type of project and on the stage the children have reached in carrying out active work. If project work is being originated in the school, perhaps one period a week would be enough, though any single period of less than 90 minutes with older children and 60 minutes with younger ones would be useless. A whole afternoon would probably be needed as soon as the project was well under way.

#### 6. PLANNING THE ROOM

Few schools at present can give up a room to project work, so the classroom has to be adapted. Large numbers of children and heavy old-fashioned desks are great drawbacks, but careful arrangement of furniture and an insistence on tidiness will help. Materials should always be found in the same places and should be put back there. Activity work need not mean disorder and children will readily respond to an orderly routine. One of the great values of activity work is the self-discipline which the child will accept—a discipline imposed by the job in hand.

Careful planning on the lines indicated will ensure that time is not wasted and that the work accomplished is sound. Critics of project work rightly complain that much of it is too loose and too ephemeral, that the interest developed leads to smatterings of knowledge and not to sound learning. Criticisms can only be answered by results, and the teacher who believes that the project method is based on valid educational principles must be prepared to carry out a good deal of experimental work. Not only must he plan with foresight, but he must watch the development of the work

carefully, insisting on each task being properly finished and each section of the project properly rounded off. The method arouses interest, but let us bear in mind that the main object of arousing interest is to give the stimulus that will overcome difficulties of learning.

### *Local Surveys*

The second method of giving reality to the curriculum is by carrying out a local survey. Any method which is based on the environment of the child is rooted in reality and although in the Junior School the survey should not be too wide, it will have great value.

A child's world is limited. He lives in a certain place; he knows its streets; he knows the school, the picture house, the public library, the church; he meets the people—milkman, postman, dustman; he knows where his father, his brother and the man next door go to work. All these things interest him and the local survey will not only enable him to see more clearly the conditions of his daily life, but will also encourage him to look beyond his immediate neighbourhood.

"Since the social experiences of the child are the mainsprings of his education, no Primary School curriculum can be considered satisfactory which does not find its roots in the child's responses to his environment outside the school."<sup>\*</sup>

If we accept this, it obviously follows that the exploration and understanding of environment is a vital educational need and we must work out a method of carrying out this exploration.

Children love to explore, and if we suggest to them the idea of exploration we shall be setting off on the right foot. We are not concerned with academic or statistical records; the work should be a co-operative effort with the object of finding out some interesting things about "our district," "our town" or "our village." It is important that the idea of "our" district should be stressed, for if the survey is successful, it will help the child to become a better member of his community, aware of its advantages and

perhaps of some of its deficiencies, anxious to play a part in the life of that community.

### *How to Begin*

As in the project method, it is essential that the teacher should have in mind the lines he intends to follow. There are so many possible approaches to the work that it is wise for a lead to be given to the children. As the survey proceeds, parts of the plan will inevitably be thrown overboard, for the children will themselves suggest investigations and these suggestions should be followed up. Rigidity is not desirable.

What kind of thing should the young explorer look for? How is he to record his observations? How long should the survey be carried on? The answers to these and many other questions depend on the particular environment of the school. It would perhaps be helpful if two examples were taken—a village and an urban area.

### *The Village*

To make a survey of a village is comparatively easy. The boundaries are fixed, the children are very familiar with their surroundings and the whole is a compact and enclosed area, probably cut off very obviously from the next village or the nearest town.

An account of how one small village school carried out a survey may show possible lines of work.

After discussion with the children, a list was made of some possible lines of study. It worked out something like this—

- The village boundaries.
- The roads and where they lead to.
- The footpaths.
- The crops.
- The buildings—inns, churches and chapels, parish hall, old houses, the school.
- The people—their occupations.
- History.
- Water, electricity.

\* "The Content of Education" (The Interim Report

The school.  
Parish charities.  
The Parish Council.

It was decided that each child should keep a rough notebook for the information collected and that finally a book about the village should be made, consisting of the best work in each section. Maps of the village and its boundaries were traced from the ordnance map, scaled down and cyclostyled. The first piece of work attempted was a map of the roads and footpaths. Each road was put in on the map, with its name, direction and destination, together with the distance to the nearest town or village by that road. This led to two interesting discoveries. The first was that one road, still called "the Welsh Road," was one of the old roads used by drovers who brought sheep from the marches of Wales. Some facts on place names arose from this and we were able to realize the antiquity of our own and the surrounding villages. The second interesting discovery was that an important road originally ran where now there was merely a footpath. Why did this road die out of use, and when? Such questions bring home to us the value of a local survey. Children are stimulated to link up the present with the past—history becomes alive. For such work, access to parish records is invaluable. For example, by examining the Enclosure Act we were able to reconstruct the original Three-Field system of medieval times and to make a map showing the North Field, the Mill Field, and the Hill Field. How vividly the reason for the Enclosures is brought home to children when they read this in the original document—

The said Lands and grounds of the said Frebreders, Land owners and proprietors in the said common and open fields of . . . aforesaid respectively lay intermixed and dispersed in small parcels in and over the said common fields and were most of them inconveniently situated with respect to the several Houses in the Township of . . . aforesaid and that by reason thereof a sufficient quantity of manure and compost could not without great difficulty and expence be conveyed to the same nor frequent trespasses and disputes among the several proprietors be prevented and that so long as the said common fields and common grounds lay open, commonable and uninclosed they produced very little profit to their respective proprietors and in their then present situation were a great discouragement to industry and improvement.

A village child of ten or eleven can readily understand the reasons given. No doubt he will also point out that in 1758 spelling was different and sentences were too long.

A Land Utilization map gives a picture of the crops and pasture of the area and brings home to the children the importance of their village in the general scheme of food production for the country. They love to fill in their maps with the different colours for the various crops and to connect each field with the farmers they know.

If the village is fortunate enough to possess a craftsman, as ours was, much will be learned from a visit to his workshop, and the pride in real craftsmanship that they see there may have a lasting effect.

Field names are a source of much interest and the help of parents, grandparents, and old inhabitants may be sought. Some names, verbally handed down, baffle any attempt at explanation. It is easy to understand why a field should be called "The Butts," but what, if anything, is the meaning of "Ouze Itch" or "Ostler's Nob"?

So the pattern of the work emerges, and the young explorers make their expeditions, fill in their notebooks, construct their models, and begin to show a pride and an interest in their immediate neighbourhood that must make them more fitted and more willing to play their parts in its affairs when the time comes.

But it is not enough to concentrate on one small parish. They must look farther afield: for example, to the nearby towns. Where does this road lead to? How far is it to that town? What are the main occupations of the people there? How many people live there? What do we send to that town from our village? These, and many other questions can be the starting point for wider inquiries which will show the children that they are members of a wider community.

### *The Town*

In a town, local study is not so easy. The area is not so clearly defined and at first there is difficulty in finding a pattern or a central point for the work.

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We can begin with the school or the home as a centre.

What are the names of the streets?  
 To what main roads do they lead?  
 What buses run past the school or house and where do they go?  
 What shops are there near?  
 To what shops or other buildings do my family go every day (week)?  
 What is made at the factory in X Road?  
 Where do the raw materials come from and where do the finished products go?  
 What people do we see nearly every day (postman, milkman, policeman, bus-driver, etc.)?  
 What is the Town Hall and what happens there?

A very long list of such questions could be drawn up in consultation with the class. The teacher who is alive to the possibilities latent in the study of environment will have no difficulty in planning his work on these lines. Pictures, charts, dramatic work, spoken and written English, craft work in clay, papier mâché, cardboard and wood, puppetry, arithmetic—all these will find a natural place in our local study work and the child's life will be enriched and fulfilled as he learns his way about the community and realizes his part in that community. The techniques of reading, writing, and number will no longer be isolated stumbling blocks; they will be seen as necessary tools for

the job in hand—keys to unlock doors to the further knowledge the child needs.

### *Visual and Aural Aids*

In all this work, we must not neglect the valuable aid of the film, the film strip, the radio. It must be recognized that the film is an important influence in the child's life; whether we like it or not he will see films, good and bad. The film is part of his life and if we neglect or underestimate its influence we are not fully realizing its possibilities. Careful selection of films and judicious use of the film projector can be of great value in our environmental work. For example, the story of the postman and the letters he delivers can be linked up with the film "Night Mail." We can thus give a reality and drama to the topic which could not be given in any other way.

The film strip has its own advantages. Selection of frames can be made at the teacher's discretion, and question and answer can be carried on during the showing of the pictures. Even if Junior children are too young to make their own strips, the teacher who knows something of photography should not find it beyond his powers, and the interest such a film strip would arouse can be imagined.

A warning may be necessary. To show a film or to flick through a film strip is not to give a lesson. These are aids, not aims, and preparation for the showing, careful teaching and thorough follow up are all essential.

### *Analysis of "Formal" and "Activity" Time-tables.*

FORMAL	Minutes	ACTIVITY	Minutes
Arithmetic	225	Practice in Tool Subjects	330
English	330	Activity and Project Work	405
History	60	Dramatic Work	75
Geography	60	R.I.	150
Nature	75	Music	60
Music	60	Games	60
P.T.	120	P.T.	195
Games	60	History or Geography or Nature	75
Art or Handwork	150	Assembly, Registration, Routine Tasks,	
Drawing, Practical Work, or Needlework	150	Planning the Day	150
Optional	60	Recreation	150
R.I., Assembly, Registration	150		
Recreation	150		
Total	1,650	Total	1,650

THE INTEGRATION OF THE CURRICULUM

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		9	9.30	10.15	10.45	11	11.30	12	2	3.15	3.30	4	4.30
Monday	Assembly, Registration, and Religious Instruction Arithmetic		History			P.T.	English		Art or Handwork			English	Music
Tuesday			Geography				English		Drawing (Boys) or Practical Work Needlework (Girls)		English	P.T.	
Wednesday			Nature			Music	English		Art or Handwork			Games	
Thursday			History			P.T.	English		Drawing (B.) or Practical Work Needlework (G.)			English	
Friday			Geography			P.T.	English		English Nature			Optional	

Time-table for Top Class in a Junior Mixed School Working on Formal Lines

Notes: A. 'English' includes Oral and Written work, Drama, Reading, Speech.  
B. 'Drawing or Practical Work' for boys might include simple Geometrical or Mechanical Drawing, Practical Arithmetic or Gardening.

		9	9.30	10.15	10.45	11	11.30	12	2	3.15	3.30	4	4.30
Monday	Assembly, Registration, Routine Tasks, Planning Out the Day	P.T.	Practice in Tool Subjects			Practice in Tool Subjects			Dramatic Work			R.I.	Music
Tuesday		R.I.	P.T.			Practice in Tool Subjects			Activity Project			and Work	
Wednesday		P.T.	Practice in Tool Subjects			Music	Practice in Tool Subjects		History or Geography or Nature			Games	
Thursday		R.I.	P.T.			Practice in Tool Subjects			Activity Project			and Work	
Friday		P.T.	Practice in Tool Subjects			R.I.	Practice in Tool Subjects		Activity Project			and Work	

Time-table for Top Class in a Junior Mixed School Working on Activity Lines

Note: 'Tool Subjects' = Oral and Written English, Reading, Arithmetic

*Final Words on Preparation*

To a teacher starting any form of activity work, the best advice that can be given is—**HASTEN SLOWLY**. The enthusiastic teacher who plunges into the work with only his enthusiasm is probably doomed to failure. Too often we have seen keen teachers take up a new idea or a new method, try it out for a time, and then give it up, disillusioned, because it has failed. But in nine cases out of ten it is not the method that has failed, but the teacher. Enthusiasm is not enough; it must be backed up by solid and careful preparation. An additional warning must be given against the over-enthusiasm which causes a teacher to throw overboard his class time-table in an attempt to revolutionize the curriculum. Begin by giving up one or two periods a week to a project or a piece of activity work. Increase the amount of time when the children have come insensibly to appreciate something of the spirit behind the plan. As they become used to the new routine, as they learn self-reliance, they will be able to accomplish more, and even the most backward child will find his feet and make his contribution.

It cannot be too often stressed that only careful forethought on the teacher's part will ensure success. What type of preparation is necessary? In a previous section on the Project Method some indication of the planning that is essential was given, but it must be repeated here that the teacher should have in his mind—and on paper—a fairly complete summary of the work to be attempted. If he intends to start the scheme in September, at the beginning of the year's course, then he should have spent some time during the holiday at work on his plan of campaign. For example, suppose a local survey is being attempted; the teacher should literally have been over the ground to be

covered. He need not have at his finger tips every detail of the history, geology, or administration of the district, but the broad outlines of these studies must be in his mind and he must be able to give a lead to the children on almost any aspect of the life of the neighbourhood. Some of his knowledge will come as he works with the group, but there is often considerable difficulty, especially with Junior children, in obtaining clarity in outline and precision in detail. It is so easy in this type of work to be actively employed yet to end up the investigation with very little real knowledge. It is the teacher's duty to be absolutely clear with regard to purpose, direction, and, to a lesser extent, facts, and their value.

The school and class libraries should be built up with a view to enabling the children, not only to read widely on selected topics, but also to ensure that they are able to find facts, pictures, and references that they need. Files of pictures, maps, and other illustrative material should be collected as the work proceeds, though there should be a nucleus started by the teacher before work begins. The local librarian might be consulted and arrangements made for necessary books to be obtained and for visits to the library by groups of children.

A most important part of the preparation for local survey work is the making of preliminary contacts before the activity begins in school. A letter to the local Clerk to the Council, the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, or other local official will ensure that the goodwill of the neighbourhood is obtained. Other letters to factory managers, transport officials, librarians, etc., are necessary before any visit is made. These local contacts are of the greatest importance, not only in enlisting help and stimulating interest in education in the district, but also in showing the children the need for elementary courtesy.

# ENGLISH



"A GLORIOUS PORTAL OPENED WIDE"—*The Pied Piper of Hamelin*

## READING

**I**N ordinary life reading is the interpretation of printed and written words and sentences; but in school reading has so many aspects and side-issues that the ordinary meaning of the word and the principal value of the process are often forgotten. To be able to interpret, one must have somehow acquired a certain mechanical skill, one must be able to recognize letters and words, and to associate the latter with their spoken sounds and with their meanings. It is inevitable that the mechanical difficulties should bulk large in the classroom, and, consequently, the name reading is often given to the process of acquiring the mechanical skill necessary for reading, which process is no more than a part of reading, or a means to an end. This is an unfortunate error: the main aim of the teacher must always be to teach the pupil to read in the full and proper sense, and the acquisition of the mechanical skill, as well as

all the side-aspects of reading, such as correct pronunciation, clear enunciation, graceful expression, must be kept subordinate.

### *Acquiring Mechanical Skill*

At present two modes of regarding the process of acquiring the mechanical skill, or technique, of reading may be found in Infants' Schools, and these give rise to different methods of teaching. One way is to teach the technique first, after which the pupils are taught, or should be taught, to read for the meaning. The other is to practise reading in the full sense from the beginning, the mechanical skill being acquired concurrently, and more or less insensibly. In either case, when the pupil comes from the Infants' School at seven he should have begun to read in the full sense. It is the task of the Junior School, by further practice and by definite instruction, to develop his incipient

powers, till, at the end of the period and before entering the Senior School, he is able to read all sentences which are within his comprehension, and which consist of words with whose meanings he is acquainted.

The teacher of the lowest class in the Junior School is obliged, therefore, to adopt a certain attitude toward the mechanical art of reading, and to do that properly he (or she) must have a clear idea of the stage at which the pupils have arrived, and of the mechanical habits followed by the adults who read best.

### *The Adult Reader*

Adults who are skilled readers—and nearly all adults nowadays read with considerable frequency—do not visualize and decipher each letter and word in every sentence which they read. They read in larger wholes than words, taking in at each glance groups which may be as large as a group of three or four words. If they do not do that they cannot read with sufficient rapidity, nor can they understand properly the meaning of what they read.

### *The Young Reader*

But to be able to read in this manner they must previously have become intimately familiar with the visual appearance of each word; their developed efficiency depends upon their having acquired the power to decipher each word, although they do not habitually do so. The pupil is gradually learning this skill; he has to learn the words, while—in the Junior School, at any rate—reading for the meaning all the time. Whatever methods of teaching the early steps in reading have been employed in the Infants' School, when the pupil reaches the Junior School he must be presumed to be grappling with words. He should be taught the whole word, not parts of words; he should be given the sound of the word in association with its printed form; it is not profitable for him to try to build words from syllables or other parts.

### *Spelling and Reading*

Lest any misconception should remain, it must be pointed out that English words cannot

be learnt from the spelling alone, because the spelling is irregular. Before a pupil can pronounce an unknown word from its spelling he has to apply to the teacher, or, if he is able to do so, to a pronouncing dictionary. Only 5 per cent of words and 46 per cent of letters are regular, according to the alphabet of letter-sounds which is most widely used in Infants' Schools, and this alphabet is as good as any that could be devised. The discrepancy between English writing and English speech is, however, of less importance than might seem to be the case, because the relation between reading and spelling is less close than is often supposed. Ability in spelling and ability in mechanical reading are not the same ability. Written words are easier to recognize than to recollect—that is, reading in the mechanical sense is easier than spelling. Reading tends to help spelling, because the reader of a word is bound to give attention to some part of it: great readers are generally, though not always, good spellers. Conversely, spelling helps reading, because it fastens attention upon the parts of words, and so makes them easier to recognize as wholes; but spelling-difficulty is very different from reading-difficulty; in fact, in a given sentence, the word that is hardest to spell may be easiest to read, because its form is most distinctive. It is easier for the rapid-glancing eye to distinguish between *recognized* and *seen* than between *seen* and *seen*, and this visual fact is equally true for the child and the adult, although the child may be quite unable to connect the printed word *recognized* with its spoken form. Much confusion exists in the minds of teachers as to the foregoing facts.

### *Analysis of the Act of Reading Aloud*

It is time now to attempt some analysis of the physical and mental event which occurs when any one reads.

Firstly, there is a set of *visual perceptions* of the words in the text. These are referred to a corresponding set of *visual images* of the same words which have been formed in the mind from previous perceptions of them: in other words, they are *recognized*.

Secondly, these visual images instantaneously

call up a set of *auditory images* of the words, which auditory images are associated with the visual images.

Thirdly, the words are uttered aloud. The auditory images are associated with muscular images in the throat, nose, lips, tongue, etc., and these in their turn give rise to the movements of the vocal apparatus, and so the proper sounds are pronounced. These sounds are themselves heard or perceived, of course, exactly as the eye saw the printed words upon the page.

Fourthly and last, and the crown of the process, the visual images, auditory images, and muscular images, as well as the sight of the print and the sound of the spoken words are all associated in a complex manner with the *meaning* of the words, so that ideas, images of objects, and feelings are excited in the mind of the reader.

### *Analysis of Silent Reading*

In silent reading the process is similar, with the exception that the words are not uttered or heard. It must not be thought, however, that speech is entirely missing from silent reading. Audible speech is no longer there, it is true; but its place is taken by an inner and silent speech, which consists of the auditory images together with sensations and incipient movements of the speech organs.

### *Progress from Oral to Rapid Silent Reading*

Silent speech is not of much practical importance to the teacher; but its existence, and the analysis, show why the child reads aloud before he can read silently; it shows, further, since the sensations and movements of inner speech are extremely rapid and fragmentary, why people can read silently faster than they can read aloud; and, finally, these considerations teach two important lessons to the teacher. The first is that lip-movement and whispering during silent reading should be discouraged, because silent reading cannot become rapid until the inner speech has become fragmentary. At first, lip-reading is natural; it is a necessary step on the road from oral reading to efficient silent reading, but it should gradually disappear. The second

lesson is that the pupil should be allowed to read silently as soon as possible, and that there should not be so much emphasis upon oral reading that the development of the habit of silent reading is in any degree hindered. Rapid silent reading is the main goal of reading regarded as a mechanical skill.

### *Developing the Maximum Individual Efficiency*

The great practical difficulties of the teacher in the early classes of the Junior School are that he has to enable the pupils to acquire the necessary mechanical skill while at the same time requiring them to read for the sense, and that the fully developed skill is very different from the first beginnings. As regards the first difficulty, if the attention of the pupil is deliberately directed to the mechanical art he has none to spare for the meaning of what he reads. As regards the second, the two acts are so different as to be almost opposite to one another. At first the pupil has to concentrate on the separate printed letters, ultimately he perceives only the most prominent features of the print; at first he has to read aloud, ultimately his reading is mainly silent; at first he is obliged to read slowly, ultimately he must read fast. It is extremely important that good reading habits should be formed early, and bad habits avoided, because upon the excellence or otherwise of these habits will depend the efficiency of the reader in time to come. Habits which interfere with comprehension, such as incessant attention to elocution in oral reading, must be avoided. Again, it has been found that slow readers do not remember as much as those who read faster, and, therefore, any practices which make for slow reading should be avoided likewise; but it does not follow that the rate of reading can be indefinitely increased, or that all pupils are capable of reading with equal rapidity. They vary greatly; there are slow readers and rapid readers, and the most rapid readers are those who are most efficient in all respects—they are best mechanically, they comprehend most, and they remember most accurately and completely. Every reader has his own rate of maximum efficiency, and he will lose

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if he is restricted below this rate or forced above it. In general, pupils read below their rates of maximum efficiency, and the teacher should endeavour to bring them up to these rates, and no further.

### *Importance of Suitable Print*

As children, when learning to read, have to attend to the details of the print, while adults, having become familiar with the visual appearance of each printed word, need see only the main features of each word in order to recognize it, the pupils must be supplied with books printed in larger type than is appropriate to adults. Otherwise, eye-strain will be caused. Children of 7 should not read type less than 2.6 mm. in height, and of sufficient blackness, children of 8 need type not less than 2 mm. in height, and children of 9 and 10 need type not less than 1.8 mm. in height. These sizes are illustrated by the following—

#### AGE 7

Once upon a time, there lived in the town of York a little girl named Mary.

#### AGE 8

Once upon a time, there lived in the town of York a little girl named Mary.

#### AGE 9 AND 10

Once upon a time, there lived in the town of York a little girl named Mary.

In reading, the eye does not move uniformly along the line, but makes a series of movements separated by pauses. During the movements it is insensitive or almost insensitive; perception of the type takes place only during the pauses. At first the movements are short and the pauses long, but as skill improves, the length of each movement increases and the duration of each pause lessens. To encourage the growth of a good habit of uniform movement the lines should not be too short, nor should they be irregular in length. On the other hand, the eye tends to stray from one line to the next if the lines are excessively long, unless its movements are slow. Lines between 80 mm. and 95 mm. in

length are most convenient for average purposes. It goes without saying that the paper should be sufficiently opaque, white, and not glossy.

### *Different Uses of Reading*

The Junior School, while exercising and perfecting children in the art of interpreting written language, has to perform quite a number of different functions, which, although they cannot in actual fact be disentangled from one another, and are all subservient to the general aim, are yet quite distinct, so that one or other of them will at a given time be uppermost in the mind of the teacher.

One of the chief reasons for reading is to obtain information. The pupils should be accustomed to the idea that books will yield information, and they should be tested in various ways upon the matter of what they have read, by oral questions, and by written questionnaires.

Again, pupils read in order to learn how to get information, and they should be given exercises which will compel them to follow proper methods of getting information, e.g. exercises leading to the tabulation of scattered facts, and exercises involving deductions from facts supplied by the reading matter.

Thirdly, the beginning of reading is, or should be, one of the beginnings of literature. It is not the only beginning, but since most literature is now read silently, and silent reading rapidly becomes an important means of contact with literature in school, the reading books, of which more anon, should be regarded as consisting of literature. The pupils are to learn the love of books, and to love reading, at the same time as they are acquiring skill.

Lastly, reading is important in relation to the understanding of speech and writing. It is one of the chief means by which the vocabulary is expanded and enriched, and by which the sentence-capacity of the pupil is developed. Speech alone is not sufficient for this. The extracts in the reader have to offer patterns worthy of imitation; but speech and reading together are still insufficient. As teachers know, transcription is an important composition exercise; it is no substitute for reading in this respect, but, as an aid, it is superior to reading in so far

as it forces the writer to attend more closely to the form of what he is copying. Exercises connected with the substance of the passages transcribed should be set by the teacher, and, like the other types of exercise, they should be both oral and written.

### *Oral Reading for Speech Training*

The paragraphs which have immediately preceded have reference only to reading as silent; but oral reading continues, and is a regular feature of the curriculum of all Junior classes. This is partly because it is still a means of improving the power to read silently, partly because it furnishes evidence of the degree of skill obtained by the learner. In the main, however, it is an exercise in elocution. It should be regarded as a branch of speech training, and should be separated from silent reading, which, in the course of a year or two, and certainly as early as possible, should become the type of reading lesson appearing most frequently on the time-table.

Oral reading at this Junior age is quite different from the earliest beginnings, which were a necessary preliminary to reading silently. It depends upon the power to read silently; for, before the pupil can understand what he is reading aloud and speak it with proper expression, he must have acquired the power and habit of letting his eye run on ahead, so that he may gather the sense in anticipation. Therefore, reading aloud is not easy; it is an elocutionary exercise at which many efficient silent readers are poor performers. All children need practice and intelligent instruction and criticism in this department of their work.

### *Reading "Round the Class"*

What is sometimes called "the old-time reading lesson"—though it still survives in schools, and still appears, indeed, to be a common method of taking reading with a class—arose because reading was regarded solely as the acquirement of mechanical skill, and was tested accordingly at annual inspections. It had the virtue that it kept the class quiet, and, of course, it gave evidence of proficiency in oral

reading, and provided opportunities for criticism by the teacher. Pursued exclusively, without other lessons devoted to silent reading, it is far more open to objection than when it is combined with such lessons; but it has serious objections of its own. At one time it was standard practice to use it for "intelligence," i.e. for digressions on all sorts of topics arising incidentally during the reading; but the progress of the class was excruciatingly slow, and too often the text became a mere series of pegs for the teacher's disquisitions, and was forgotten and neglected as a thing unworthy of comprehension and remembrance. Moreover, it is obvious that it is the worst pupils who need the most practice, and the conscientious teacher gave them most, with the result that the rest of the class spent their time listening to bad models. Not always did the teacher attempt to apply even the feeble corrective of reading the piece himself. Lastly, owing to the size of the classes, no member had enough practice.

Many, perhaps most, children will engage in silent reading, even if they are not afforded formal opportunities of doing so. How often in an oral reading lesson of this sort did (and does) the pupil called upon to read aloud not do so because he could not find the place, owing to his having gone on ahead silently while his predecessor executed his elocutionary performance! It is really surprising that so many teachers failed to take to heart the criticism of their work implied in these apparent faults of inattention on their pupils' part, failed to realize that the pupils were quiet because they had found something worthier of their attention.

### *New Methods with Oral Reading Lessons*

There are various lines of improvement, besides separating oral and silent reading, and devising appropriate tests for both. It is necessary to prevent children from listening to bad reading, and to enable them to listen to good reading.

The weaker pupils can read aloud to the teacher individually in some adjacent place, while the body of the class are engaged in silent reading or other work. Another way is to employ

group reading. In this the class is divided into sets of about six pupils each, under leaders chosen by the teacher. The group leader hears each member of his group read, and corrects as he can. Meanwhile the teacher goes from group to group, hearing reading and giving help. This

### *Tests Based on Reading*

Although not measurable with exactness, elocutionary skill may be tested by merely listening to the reader; but memory tests and comprehension tests are needed for both oral



*By courtesy of*

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FIG. I  
*Reading for "Content"*

plan has the advantage that each pupil reads aloud oftener than under the old plan. The disadvantages are that correction is less efficient, and that the class still hear the poorer readers. It is, however, a particularly useful plan in schools attended by poor children who have little chance of reading good material at home.

and silent reading. The memory test is the same in both cases—a repetition, in speech or writing, of the whole or part of the original, as nearly as may be in the words of the book. A good deal of practice should be given in this. Another form of memory test is to set questions for spoken or written answers, which require a knowledge of the content of what the pupil has read.

Comprehension tests ask for more ingenuity in the devising. They may be a variety of problems on matters arising out of what has been read; or perhaps a story which has been read can be completed in a manner different from the book; or, for a description, a parallel description can be set, e.g. after a scene in summer, the same scene in winter; or a narrative can be re-enacted as an improvised drama; or two pupils can be made to exchange dialogue on an expository subject.

If a list of 100 words taken at random from a dictionary containing, say, the 15,000 words in common use is made, and if the words are arranged in rough order of frequency of use, the teacher has a simple means of testing the pupils' power of word-recognition. She has merely to find how many of the list of 100 the pupil can utter at sight to know how many words he can read in the mechanical sense. By multiplying this result by the appropriate figure—in this case 150—she has a fairly accurate measure of the total number of words so known. Thus, if a pupil knows 40 of the words in the list, his total reading vocabulary will be about 6,000 words. The same list can be used to discover the "understood" vocabulary of each pupil, and this result—the mental vocabulary—is an excellent measure of intelligence. Standard results for these tests have been published by Terman, but they need correction for English children.

### *To Teach the Meanings of Unfamiliar Words*

The mention of words leads to one of the permanent problems of the teacher, namely, the question of the best method of teaching the meanings of unknown words. Literature and language may be looked at from opposite ends, and each point of view has its merits and defects. A book is composed of chapters, which are composed of paragraphs; these contain sentences, which in their turn are separated into words. Conversely, words are combined into sentences, which form paragraphs, and so on. The first, the wider, more comprehensive view has the disadvantage of being more indefinite. The second, beginning with the word, is more precise, and, being more precise, it is the one most

used in schools. But it has the disadvantage that, strictly speaking, a word has no meaning except in a sentence, and that the meaning varies with the sentence. Similarly, though to a less degree, a sentence derives its significance, in part, from the context in which it occurs.

Most teachers in Junior Schools are accustomed to insist on the meaning of the sentence and phrase being understood, but they have also to deal with words. In a given lesson there occur a number of words whose meanings are unknown to the pupils, or difficult to grasp. When is the proper time to take these—before, during, or after the reading? It is a common practice to make a list of these words, and to explain their meanings before the reading commences. This practice is to be deprecated. It is better to wait until the first reading is accomplished, and then to elucidate and explain the meanings of the hard words.

Preparation, however, is clearly necessary, and should usually take the form of an explanation of the general nature and general meaning of the chapter, extract, or passage. It should be followed by silent reading, whether the lesson is to end there or whether the first silent reading is to be followed by an oral reading, with or without any explanation or discussion of particular words. If words are explained, the explanation should be succeeded by a silent re-reading.

### *Different Motives for Reading*

A matter to which insufficient attention has been paid is the supply of an adequate motive for reading. Little children who learn to read by natural methods generally display a strong desire to read. This is due to pleasure in the exercise of the power, as well as to curiosity to know what the text holds. The former motive fades in course of time, but if the reading matter provided is suitable the latter persists. It has to be supplemented, however, on occasion, and this should be done by the prescription of such exercises as have already been described, set by the teacher before the reading commences.

The enthusiastic teacher will establish in the children the habit of discussing among themselves books they read.

### *Suiting the Manner of Reading to the Matter*

The importance of establishing early and efficient habits in reading has been urged in this article, particularly with reference to eye-habits and speed. There is another class of virtues, peculiar to each person, which may be roughly called mental and moral habits, that also demand the teacher's attention. Many adults read to pass the time, without any need or desire to retain in memory what they read. Some can read in no other way; but there are others who can change when they want to do so, reading then with attention, and being able to summarize and use what they have read. Many readers skip, and some of them can read in that manner and yet recover detail at will. Again, books differ from one another in a similar manner; some are to be read for pastime, some for pleasure in the retention, some for the matter or for its main details. Accordingly, it is desirable that the pupil should acquire the capacity to read, when the need arises, in all these ways.

### *Avoiding a Habit of Slow Reading*

It is often assumed in school that everybody should always read to retain the matter read, or for the sole sake of the information gained. As most people seem, if left to their natural tendencies, to be inclined toward the more pleasurable, less active and alert forms of reading, perhaps the emphasis thus laid on the acquisitive form acts mainly as a salutary corrective, so that little harm is done. But these influences should not be so insistent as to produce an inveterate habit of reading slowly, for the reasons already stated.

### *Provision of Reading Matter*

The provision of the right kind of books and a sufficient amount of reading matter should also receive consideration from the teacher. Books to be read rapidly and books containing what is fit for closer study are both needed. It is an ideal not yet attained that each pupil shall have access to a library; but many primary schools and classes possess small libraries of

fiction and other kinds of literature, and sets of what are known as continuous or supplementary readers. These belong to the first class, and, however good for their proper purpose, cannot satisfy the second demand: that is to say, they do not contain matter suitable for close study.

### *Literature Readers*

This demand is usually met, as it should be, by the Graded Reader, which has to supply the means of acquiring technical skill, has to serve as an introduction to literature, and must be adjusted in difficulty to the pupil's mental achievement. It should contain great literature, and yet be in line with the pupil's dominant interests at his particular age; sentence by sentence, it has to express a spirit and ideas which are neither so advanced that he cannot comprehend them with effort, nor so easy that he can comprehend them without effort; its sentences must, on the average, be neither too long nor too short for him, and its vocabulary neither too simple nor too difficult.

### *Faults of Many Reading Books*

But good literature does not lend itself easily to these requirements, and so the compilers of such books have made many mistakes. When they have adhered faithfully to the literary requirement, they have produced a reading book which the practical teacher rejects because he cannot use it. When, remembering the pedagogical requirements, they have rewritten good literature, they have turned it into bad literature. The resulting outcry has driven them in a new direction. They have sought out pieces which could be used without alteration, and when they have found them, most of them have been devoid of literary merit.

The irregularities of English spelling have produced another kind of imperfection. If all our words were equally easy to recognize, the perfect reader would be one that represented—it would not, of course, include the whole stock of words—a vocabulary as large as, or a little larger than, the mental vocabulary of the reader. But, in the past, the difficulty of reading from print many words which are found in the speech

of all children of normal intelligence caused readers to be compiled which represented vocabularies smaller than the mental vocabularies of the pupils for whose use they were prepared. The confusion between reading-difficulty and spelling-difficulty narrowed the vocabulary, and therefore the scope of the reading matter, still further.

### *Choosing the Reading Books*

Though the dilemma is, in fact, insoluble, a good deal can be done by judicious compromise. The idea that the whole series of readers should be a very carefully graded miscellany of verse and prose should be retained, and the teacher who is choosing a new set should make this his first principle of selection. He should ascertain that a fair portion of each book consists of pieces of literary value that have been included without alteration, and that the amount of modification and editing in the rest has been kept at its necessary minimum. Any original writing by the compiler which is mixed with these extracts should have been very carefully done, and it should not be large in amount. The requirement that the books shall be suited to the pupils is a pedagogical demand so clear that it needs no emphasis; those who choose the books

may be trusted to pay sufficient attention to it. In general, indeed, they go too far, taking too low a standard of literary merit, and underestimating the pupils' mental vocabularies.

### *Essentials of a Good Junior Reader*

A good reader, then, will contain good literature, with a plentiful variety in subject and style; it will be well illustrated in colour and monochrome; it will contain suitable poetry of high merit; and all the subjects will be adjusted to the life-experience of the pupil who has to use it. The contents will, naturally, vary with his age. A Junior Reader in the youngest class would be expected to consist mainly of narrative prose and poetry, stories of personal experience similar to that of the pupil, stories of wider and rarer experience attached to characters similar to himself, animal and Nature stories, narratives of travel, and tales of adventure. Fancy has to be attended to by means of folk tales, and morality by means of fables. Finally, it is essential that there should be some humorous narrative; for the child likes amusement, and fun, and it is as important that his sense of humour should be nourished and refined as that any other part of his literary taste should be supplied with the means of development.



## SPELLING

*The pupil should learn to spell the words that are within the range of the vocabulary he uses, or of the literature that he is reading, and should not learn lists of unrelated words.—PRIMARY SCHOOL REPORT, 1931.*

**S**PELLING is one of the least popular subjects in the Junior School, and yet it is one which ever haunts teacher and scholar, and from which there is no escape. English orthography has long ceased to be phonetic, having now reached a stage which may be described as chaotic, for we all speak one language but read and write another. Many people feel that it is time something was done to simplify our spelling system, but no attempts so far have met with great success or received universal approbation. This is probably due to the fact that nobody has yet invented a system of orthography which will keep pace with the continual changes in the pronunciation of words, for the pronunciation changes and continues to change, however much we may try to stabilize it.

### *Why Teach Spelling?*

Language is a living thing which refuses to conform to man-made rules and regulations. Therefore, we, as teachers, are forced to teach spelling, for, being an arbitrary and an artificial system, it does not come naturally to the children. We know that the spelling which *does* come naturally to the child is generally incorrect, and has to be unlearnt before he can adopt our conventional system.

It was once thought that if a child were encouraged to read extensively he would automatically spell correctly. This would be true if he always read letter by letter and word by word; but as soon as a child has conquered the mechanical difficulty of placing two or three letters together to form a word, or reading unit, he passes on to read not letters, nor words in themselves, but groups. It is the meaning which engages his attention, and not the individual letters composing the individual words. His eye travels in jumps across the printed page, and the more expert he becomes in "silent" reading the bigger the jumps and, consequently, the bigger the gaps in his field of vision.

Teaching a child to read "for content" is a very important part of the teacher's work, and we shall hinder this work if we try to teach spelling by silent-reading methods.

### *How to Teach Spelling*

Extensive writing, however, does help the child with his spelling, and is probably the best method of teaching this subject; for when a child writes a word he is obliged, for a definite space of time, to give his full attention to each separate letter of the word. Clear enunciation of words is also extremely useful from the spelling point of view, for many errors in orthography are definitely due to errors in pronunciation. Such, for example, are the familiar "is" for "his" and "free" for "three." But clear enunciation will not solve all the child's spelling difficulties. It will not, for example, tell him that *walnut* is spelt with one "l," whereas *wall* has two; neither will it help the child to determine whether "wait" or "weight" is the correct form of the word he wishes to use. However good a child's speech may be, some definite instruction in spelling is needed.

Splitting a word into its component syllables is a useful device for aiding spelling, when introduced to the children at the correct time, since some long words lose their terror when they are divided into their components. But it is not a good method to teach words in syllables, for the mental pictures of a word as a whole and of the same word divided into parts are not identical. The analysis must be done by the child after he has become acquainted with the word in its entirety. Take, for instance, *whether*, *special*, and *police*. These words give a different mental picture when they are written, *whe-ther*, *spe-cial*, *pol-ice*; and this confusion of the mental images may hinder a child considerably. Most modern spelling books recognize this, and present words as wholes, leaving the child to do the syllabification.

### What Words Shall We Teach?

Some guidance is necessary to enable our young beginners to cope with the multitude of spelling demons which surround them the moment they put pen to paper. It is fairly obvious that the words which the child will require to spell correctly are those which he will use in his written exercises, and these are the words which we must make sure that he knows thoroughly before we trouble him with less familiar ones. It is felt that many authors of spelling books in their anxiety to be useful to the beginner introduce him to thousands of words many of which he will never write. Here is a selection from a few hundred monosyllables compiled for the nourishment of a child of 8 years: *adze, aisle, alms, apse, asp, baize, boa, chaise, dirge, eaves, feud, gneiss, myrrh, tyre, waltz, skein.* Why trouble the child with such words merely because they are short? There surely is a better way of quenching the child's thirst than by drowning him.

The first thing, therefore, is to decide the words which the child will write, and this is best done by a study of his exercise books, and by getting him to write lists of the names of the common things with which he comes in contact, and the ordinary affairs which constitute his life, so revealing to the teacher the words he needs to learn. Let him write such lists as "Things I do each day," "What Mother does," or make collections of names of things found in the street, in the classroom, in the playground, in the bedroom, in the kitchen, etc. These are the kinds of words he will want to use—his everyday words—and we can help him to learn these and leave the tricky, unfamiliar, puzzling words until a later date. Each child should compile his own individual dictionary.

### Lists of Familiar Words

The teacher is strongly advised to compile from the children's own vocabularies lists of words for spelling purposes, and these lists will be found to contain all those common subjects of error which occur in the written exercises. The lists will increase in length and difficulty with the increasing age of the children for whom they are designed. About five hundred words

for each year will be found to afford ample material for the spelling lesson. Wall dictionaries are a helpful device.

### Grouping of Words

When a number of essential words have been decided upon, it is advisable to divide them into groups with about ten words in a group, so that they may be presented most advantageously to the children. The grouping may take place in several ways.

#### 1. According to meaning:

e.g. *Names of Things on my Desk*—

pen, ruler, book, ink, ink-well, pencil, rubber, hole, scratch, etc.

*Things my Mother does*—

bake, sew, smile, etc.

#### 2. According to a common spelling difficulty:

e.g. *Words with silent heads*, i.e. beginning with a silent letter:

knife, knit, knob, knot, etc.

#### 3. According to a common spelling rule:

e.g. *Words changing "y" to "i" when "es" is added*:

fancy—fancies, hurry—hurries, etc.

#### 4. *Word-building*—in connection with rules:

e.g. smoke, smoker, smoked, smoking, smoky; swim, swimmer, swimming.

### The Spelling Lesson

To spend a few minutes each day at spelling is better than an occasional lengthy lesson. A spelling lesson need not be a mere dull grind. Let us suppose we wish to ensure that every child in a class, average age 8 years, learns twelve words entitled *Names of things I eat*.

We write the following on the blackboard.

bread	butter	jam	pie
pudding	dripping	sugar	sweets
cream	salt	fruit	meat

All these words are within the comprehension of the children. How shall we proceed to teach them? Of course there is the well-known method of spelling them aloud letter by letter—the droning of a dismal dirge—or we can make the children write them countless times. These

methods are so well known that they call for little comment other than a general condemnation for their futility and the boredom they produce.

A few other ways of dealing with the spelling lesson might perhaps assist the teacher and his pupils.

### Stimulating Exercises

(a) Certain children are allowed to represent different letters. When a word is said by the teacher, all the children whose letters are in that word come to the front—and form a line which spells the word.

(b) Ask the children to write all the letters of the alphabet and then cross out the letters which occur in the above words. How many letters are left and which are they?

(c) How many of the above words can you make from these twelve letters? (You may use any letter more than once.)

A B D E G I N P R S T U (6 words)

(d) How many of the above words can you make by using the letters found in this sentence?

"Freddy took many bites of the juicy green apple." (11 words.)

(e) Another interesting puzzle is to displace the letters of the words and ask the children to write them correctly; e.g.—

ETTURB, TALS, RASUG (butter, salt, sugar).

(f) The words may also be written with certain

letters missing, and the children asked to write them in full; e.g.—

C . E . M (cream); S . . . S (sweets).

(g) Finally, individual children blindfolded may be asked to spell certain words backward.

All these exercises are designed not merely to amuse the children (though it will be found that children love them, and eagerly look forward to such spelling lessons), but also to make the children look at the words, letter by letter, and so learn to spell them. Such exercises as the above lead to the careful scrutiny of each word and its ultimate analysis into its several letters.

These groups of words will be invaluable for written or for oral exercises. The children should be asked to make sentences containing them. A small competition to see who can get them all into the least number of sentences could be arranged. The meaning should always be associated with the spelling, and then homonyms present little difficulty.

Should the teacher desire help in the selection of words suitable to the requirements of the child at any age, he will perhaps find the following lists of assistance to him: Dr. Ayres' *The Thousand Commonest Words in the English Language*, Professor Boyd's *Standard List*, and Wisdom's *Everyday Words*.

Spelling games, such as spelling bees stimulate interest, and simple crossword puzzles help many children.



## COMPOSITION

**C**OMPOSITION, when used in connection with work in the Junior School, is a general term employed to cover all the efforts of our pupils to give clear connected statements, whether in speech or in writing. Complete "compositions," in the senior and adult meaning of the term, are hardly possible before the age of 11, and anything in the nature of an "Essay," or complete considered treatment of a topic, is largely out of place at this Junior stage. The term "composition" will accordingly be used in this article to connote that great variety of exercises in clear and continuous statement which now forms so large and so important a part in the English curricula of our Junior Schools.

To the teacher to-day it must be strange to remember that, if we go back but a generation, we reach a period when school "composition" was handled by most rigid and circumscribed methods; when teachers introduced the subject by requiring pupils to reproduce, usually in writing, some banal incident or story, solemnly read aloud from a special collection of such stories; when even practice of this limited kind was not given until the pupil had attained the age of 11 or 12; when little or no practice in *oral* composition was given to Junior pupils in any school, and when the written work of such pupils consisted almost entirely of spelling, transcription, and dictation. These narrow and limited methods (brought about mainly by the requirements of "Codes" and annual examinations) have disappeared very gradually from our schools, and still linger in many parts of the country, with the result that composition, even in Secondary Schools, is still a most disappointing subject. On the other hand, freer and more purposeful work, such as arises from describing an activity being pursued, brings virility and marked improvement.

### *Composition in Modern Infants' Schools*

Gradually, however, in the best Infants' Schools and Junior Schools, more rational methods are prevailing, and the results are happily observable right through the school life of our pupils. In the Infants' School the pupil is encouraged, in the first place, to *talk*. Practically all composition at this age is *oral*, and of necessity so, since the pupil's ability to think and to speak is usually far in excess of his ability to *write* his thoughts. This oral practice in clear, connected, and continuous statement is hardly to be dignified by the name of composition, and yet it is the essential basis and groundwork for all subsequent work. It should find a place in every lesson, and should be employed on every possible topic. In this sense, *every* teacher is assuredly a teacher of English. Copious material is always at hand. In the first place, nursery rhymes and tales are an inexhaustible mine. Children from "good" homes amass a wealth of splendid material of this kind, but children from less fortunate families must rely upon the *school* and the *teacher* for most of this fascinating material. Fairy tales and traditional tales innumerable exist, ready always for "telling" and "re-telling," but in addition to these every ordinary experience of child life may be enlisted for the purpose at hand—scenes and incidents of every kind; life at school or at home; the street, the countryside; Sundays and holidays; weather and seasons; all the vast child-world, fairy-land or real, may be made to yield its "subjects" and "topics" for speech and composition. Many modern Infants' Schools now give a few minutes to "News Time," in which children are encouraged to discuss their own individual domestic news.

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Infant stage will be various, and will indeed differ from time to time according to the needs and progress of the pupils. Thus at one time, or with one type of pupil, the main objective will be *continuous* speech marked by an attractive fluency. At another time, or with another topic, the teacher will aim at a well-developed *logical* statement, rather than at mere easy fluency or loquacity. Again, the subject may be such as to lend itself to *dramatic* treatment, and here the monologue develops easily into the dialogue, or into the simple children's "Play." But, whatever the subject or the treatment, it is now established that children from good Infants' Schools may be taught to approach more nearly to children from cultured and sympathetic homes in their ability to talk freely and attractively on any topic within the range of their knowledge or experience.

### *Composition at the Junior Stage*

When the pupil, at the age of 7 or 8, enters upon the definitely Junior period, it is essential that the methods as indicated above, which have been followed in the Infant stage, should be continued throughout the Junior School, and should be there developed in every possible way. The reason for this emphasis on oral composition in dealing with Juniors is fairly obvious, since, for most children at this age, writing is still a difficult art, especially writing with ink and steel pen. It is, then, expecting far too much from the average child to imagine that much *written* composition of a high order is possible during the earlier Junior years. What is possible, however, is for the Junior teacher to continue and to extend in every possible way, and in every possible "lesson," the oral practice in free expression and composition to which the pupils have become accustomed during their Infant years.

### *Oral Composition in the Junior School*

In the Junior School this oral practice will take many more varied forms than those which have been used in the Infants' School. In addition to stories *heard*, and things *seen* and *done*, a vast new world is opening to the pupils as they learn to *read* fluently—the great, wide, wonder-

ful world revealed to them through books. Everything that they experience first-hand or second-hand, through actual contact or through books, may be utilized, and as their "experience" grows so will their efforts at oral composition grow fuller and richer. Thus they may recount scenes and incidents which they have witnessed, new personal experiences that have come to them, and events and scenes which they have read about—the skill of the teachers being shown in their ability to select, out of this multitude of topics, the subject which is capable, at the moment, of forming an attractive centre of interest for the pupil. With such a wealth of rich material from which to select, topics of a vague, diffuse, and general nature should be avoided, and every effort should be made to find, or to suggest, a topic which is sufficiently particular, individual, and concrete to focus the pupil's efforts clearly and distinctly on the task at hand.

#### *(a) Conversational Methods*

Frequently, the best results are produced by easy friendly *conversational* methods, particularly with a nervous pupil, who is shyly and timidly aware of the sound of his own voice, and of his listening fellow-pupils. This conversational method needs much more attention than it usually receives. It was a cynic who observed, within the last two decades, that in the common schools of this country the eternal monotonous, sing-song, simultaneous repetitions of the pupils when "learning" their tables, spellings, capes, bays, rivers, and other things, had now been displaced by the eternal and equally monotonous monologues of the teacher. Junior composition can be developed only by a method which lies between these two extremes, and this golden mean will consist most naturally of the *conversational* method, where teacher and individual pupils join in easy and free discussion and conversation. Many difficulties prevent the rapid development of this conversational method. Among them are the Victorian tradition that children should never speak unless spoken to, the large classes which exist in many Junior Schools, and the nervousness and consequent taciturnity of those unfortunate children whose

homes afford them little opportunity for free speech and discussion; but these and other difficulties will all be overcome by the patient and sympathetic teacher, and the effect of free conversation will reveal itself clearly and fruitfully in later written composition. Little tongues must be loosened, and the very artificial method of requiring the victims to stand in front of a large class to "compose" or to talk coherently and consecutively upon a given topic, under the critical eyes and ears of the teacher and class, is, for many pupils, a species of unconscious but very real cruelty. Group work on a project involves discussion in which all should take part.

### (b) *Reproduction Methods*

But the easy and free conversational method, discussed above, is not the only method by which exercises in oral composition may be given. The method of reproduction in class or group must also occupy an important place in the teaching of the subject. In the full use of this method, the pupil should be required to give a complete account of anything he has seen, heard, read, "learnt" or done. This reproductive method will frequently deal with the subject-matter of the so-called "Oral" lessons, or with the contents of the reading books in general use. Every lesson may be enlisted for the purpose, particularly the stories in the Bible lesson, the history and geography lessons, and the Nature-study or science lessons. The subjects of all these lessons should form the basis of oral composition on every possible occasion. So far as the reading lesson is concerned the connection between the matter read and oral composition upon it is obvious. Reading and composition in this sense are clearly complementary, and the matter *read* will inevitably supply, not merely the *matter* of the oral composition, but a model of the *style* in which it should be expressed. The late Charlotte Mason and her followers in the Parents' National Educational Union (P.N.E.U.) have elevated this method of "re-telling" (after reading) into a cardinal principle, where *everything* read is reproduced immediately from memory in the form of oral composition. It is fair to state that in schools where this method has been

whole-heartedly adopted, the results in "composition" (so far as literary subjects are concerned) are very satisfactory, while the pupils' general ability to express themselves clearly and logically is greatly increased. This method of "re-telling" is also a very good and safe form of revision, and indeed any oral revision lesson might well consist of questions requiring answers of considerable length. A few well-chosen questions of this kind are infinitely preferable to the "rapid fire" of a host of questions which can all be answered in a single word, or in a very short phrase. Teachers in training colleges were, formerly, frequently instructed to require all answers to be in the form of "complete sentences." The more natural method is so to frame the questions that answers in one word are impossible. As the pupil progresses through the Junior School he should gradually be required to give longer statements. These longer statements should not be subjected to too much detailed criticism by the teacher, nor should any attempt be made to force the pupil to cast these in any pedantic or stilted form, though common childish failings, such as the continued repetition of "and," "and then," or "then" in a narrative, will, of course, receive attention and correction.

The greatest difficulty in the teaching of oral composition is that of giving sufficient *individual* practice to every member of a large class, for large classes still exist, especially in urban schools. It is for this reason that the teacher of a large class is sometimes tempted, in dealing with oral composition, to apply collective methods, and to attempt to amass, on the black-board, a written composition which is the result of the combined oral efforts of the pupils drastically edited by the teacher. This method, while it will certainly indicate what may later be required in written composition, fails in the primary aim of oral composition, which is that of giving practice in free and continuous speech to as many *individuals* as possible.

### (c) *The Dramatic Method*

There are great possibilities in the dramatic method. Dramatization in schools has received much attention during the last two or three

decades, and may now be considered to be established as a definitely educational instrument. So far as oral composition is concerned, the best results will arise where the "drama" or "play" is *original* rather than conventional; when the "play," or "act," or "scene" is composed and arranged as far as possible by the members of the class, and not merely reproduced from some printed and published play. The latter may be used for the guidance and inspiration of the teacher, but the *ad hoc* "scene," "act," or "play" is usually the one which appeals most to the pupils, especially when it is wholly evolved by themselves out of their own reading and experience. But whatever form it takes, the dramatic method is a *safe* method, for children's play is largely made up of acting or pretending, and the teacher's task is merely to transfer this play-time zest to the school or the classroom. So important is the subject considered, especially in America, that a whole literature of the dramatic method in schools has arisen, and teachers who are still sceptical of its possibilities are recommended to read a few of the more modern books dealing with its developments. The method clearly suffers from the common objection to most oral composition methods, in that it is seldom possible to give dramatic practice to all members of a large class, but to admit this defect in the method is not to deny its undoubted use in schools.

#### (d) *The Method of Debate*

Another useful method of giving practice in oral composition is the method of debate. The formal debate, conducted according to well-established rules and conventions, is more suited for senior pupils and adults, but much may be done with Juniors by a skilful teacher, in the matter of informal debates which will give useful practice in oral composition. The success of the method largely depends upon the subject selected for debate, and in illustration we give a few topics which are included in the Junior Books of the *Common-Sense English Course* (Pitman).

- (a) What is the best season of the year?
- (b) Is the summer holiday better than the winter holiday?

- (c) Are tales of adventure better than tales of school life?
- (d) The best way of spending a wet half-holiday.
- (e) The best out-door game.
- (f) The best indoor hobby.
- (g) Is the seaside better than the country for a holiday?
- (h) Should boys learn to cook?
- (i) Is it better to be an only child, or one of a family?
- (j) Have town children more advantages than country children?
- (k) Is it better to live to-day than it was to live a hundred years ago?
- (l) Which is the best present to receive: a bicycle, a camera, or a wireless set?
- (m) Which is the more responsible life: that of a bus-driver, or that of an engine-driver?
- (n) What kind of a shop has the most attractive window at Christmas-time?
- (o) What is the best kind of "pet" to keep?
- (p) Is cricket a better game than football?
- (q) What school subject is the most useful one?
- (r) Is a journey by motor-bus better than a journey by train?
- (s) Are the new motor roads better than the old coach roads?
- (t) Should all boys be Boy Scouts and all girls Girl Guides?

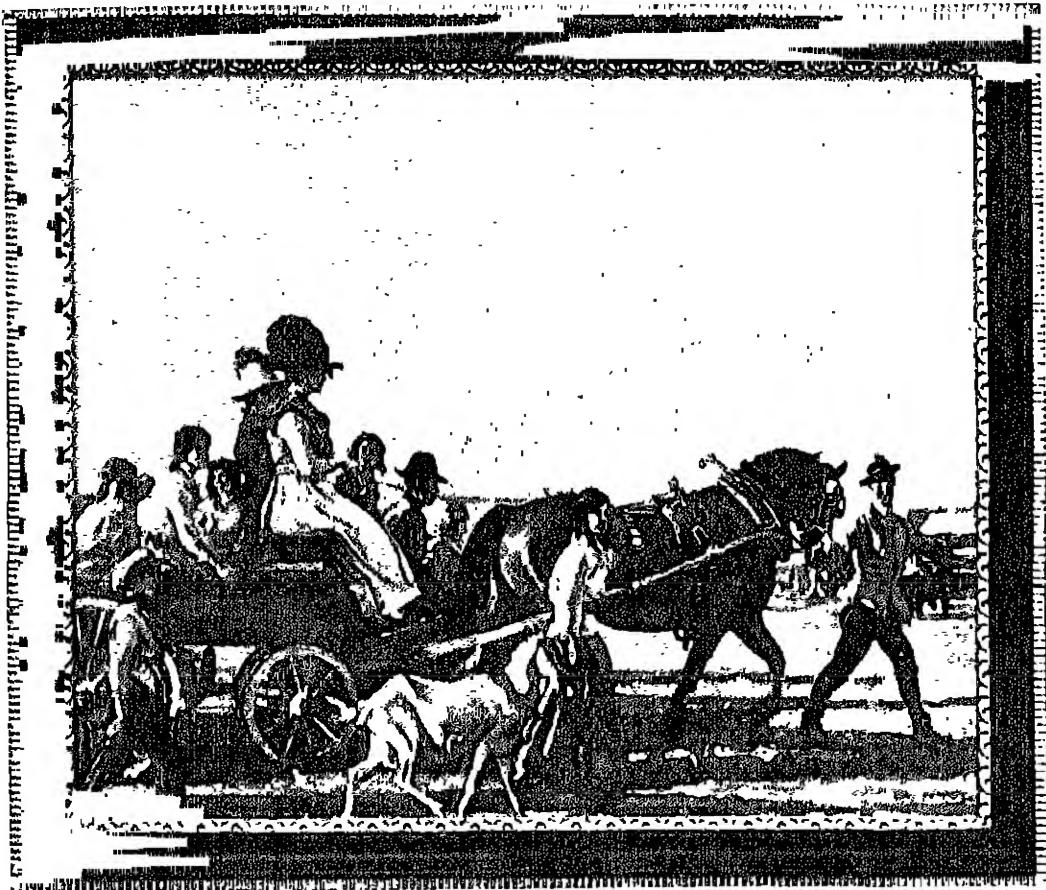
Topics such as these may be discussed either by the teacher with the class or by members of the class without too much assistance from the teacher.

#### (e) *Oral Composition Based on Pictures*

There is one common method of teaching oral composition which really combines all the preceding methods, and this method is found in the use of pictures. All teachers who are familiar with the "Direct" method of teaching foreign languages will remember the great part played in this method, especially in the early stages, by conversations based on pictures. It is true that these pictures are frequently of a highly artificial nature, composed expressly for the purpose at hand, but few will doubt their efficacy. It is strange, therefore, that this same

method, based upon a picture or an illustration, is not more commonly employed in our Junior Schools. In these days of photography and high-class reproductions suitable pictures and illustrations abound, but a word of warning is necessary. At this stage, reproductions of well-

*all* reproductions of famous pictures as material for composition lessons. Much will depend upon the *subject* of such pictures. Thus it is now possible to obtain very fine coloured reproductions (from the Medici Society) of the mural paintings which decorate St. Stephen's Hall at



By courtesy of

The Medici Society

FIG. 2

*Gypsies Arriving on Epsom Downs*  
(After A. J. Munnings, R.A.)

known pictures by great artists are not of necessity the best material for practice in oral composition, and teachers would do well to avoid, as far as possible, the attempt to teach conventional artistic appreciation of acknowledged masterpieces, when they are really seeking to give the pupils practice in *oral composition*.

But this warning is not intended to condemn

the Houses of Parliament, Westminster, and pictures such as these, from the historical nature of their subject-matter, make ideal material for oral composition. On the other hand, the possibilities of some pictures, even of such a masterpiece as Franz Hals's "Laughing Cavalier," are soon exhausted so far as composition is concerned. Much more, however, is possible

with the ordinary day-to-day photographs and illustrations now to be found in most newspapers and periodicals. Some of these, especially those of the type of the *Illustrated London News* and others, will afford a constant supply of topical pictures, crowded with incident, upon which endless conversations, discussions, and compositions may be based. At the earliest stages coloured illustrations will perhaps be most attractive, but at a later stage the influence of colour is less important. If pictures are to form a valuable aid to composition, teachers should gradually amass a portfolio of illustrations suitable for the purpose. These, if strongly mounted, will last a very long time, and will provide endless sources of inspiration for composition, oral and written. Exercises based upon them, whether in speech or writing, should not be confined to the bare descriptive catalogue of what is *seen* in the picture, but should take every form which free fancy may dictate, whether narrative or descriptive, according to the subject-matter of the illustration, and the thoughts to which it may give rise. This method of teaching oral composition through the medium of illustrations and pictures suffers from the drawback that few pictures or illustrations otherwise suitable for the purpose are capable of being readily seen by all members of a large class, but this difficulty can readily be overcome by the now common device of dividing the class into smaller sections, all of which need not be employed upon the same task. Thus, while one section is engaged in oral composition based upon a picture, the other pupils might be engaged upon other kinds of written work. Finally, with the youngest pupils, it may be necessary to concentrate the childish efforts by means of a few definite questions set by the teacher upon the subject of the picture, such questions to be answered individually, both orally and in writing.

#### (f) *Miscellaneous Methods in Oral Composition*

Lastly, in the regular practice of oral composition, teachers to-day wisely make use of day to day material such as private and domestic news, current events, local and national, important or historic ceremonies, "the event of the

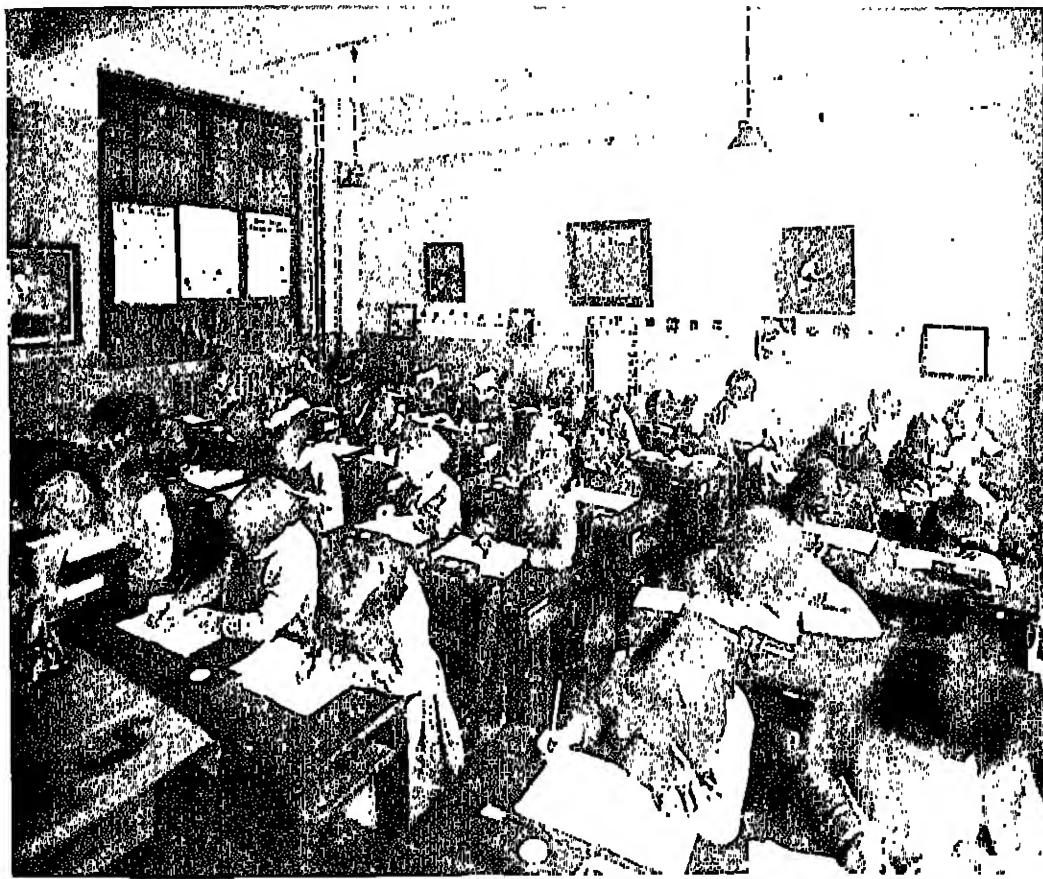
week," and similar topics prominent in the press, most of which are well illustrated. "Their weekly" can become "the weekly" if necessary.

Teachers find a regular place in their weekly "English" programme for exercises based upon material of this kind. In this connection the weekly illustrated pages of such a periodical as *The Times Educational Supplement* will provide excellent opportunities for oral work. By such means the pupil, even the most junior of Junior pupils, may be led to take that interest in the affairs of his country, and of the world in general, which the existence of a universal franchise makes so necessary to-day, if this voting power is to be used with wisdom and discretion. In the second place, there are what may be termed "anniversaries" of famous historical events, and birthdays of famous people, etc. These, of course, may be gleaned from the daily papers, and some enterprising publishers have issued excellent calendars, in card form, giving a notable event for nearly every day in the year. These again, wisely used, will provide suitable material for conversation, discussion, and composition, as will visits and group activities.

In this discussion of the possibilities of oral composition in Junior Schools, many hints and suggestions for topics have been given, and it has been indicated that there are many avenues still wholly or partly unexplored. Indeed, we believe that the real method of oral composition with Juniors is still only *beginning* to penetrate into our schools, and that boundless possibilities still exist. We believe, further, that if a pupil can only be persuaded and encouraged to *talk* fluently and easily upon a suitable topic, then half, if not more, of the terrors of written composition will completely disappear. In saying this we are fully aware of the limitations of the method, both from its individual and its collective side; we know all too well that some children seem temperamentally incapable of any coherent expression of their thoughts in words, especially in front of their fellow pupils, while we realize fully the difficulties of the conscientious teacher, who daily faces a large class and a time-table crowded with a multitude of subjects. But to admit this is not to condemn the method of oral composition as impracticable in schools as

organized to-day, and we would urge all teachers, especially young teachers just entering the profession, to persevere with the subject in all its varieties, for we earnestly believe that by so doing they will be laying a foundation of priceless value in all later English work, especially written work.

teachers are fully aware that writing at the Junior stage is frequently an art only *partly* mastered; that the pupil's ability to speak and to read is usually greatly in advance of his ability to write, and that frequently the business of writing is an ordeal slowly and laboriously



*By courtesy of*

*The London County Council*

FIG. 3  
*Written Composition*

### *Written Composition*

Sooner or later, however, in the Junior School, the formidable task of *writing* a "composition" must be faced. The exact age or stage at which this task is to be attempted is difficult to state. Theoretically, written work in composition may be attempted as soon as the pupil has learned the art of writing. In practice, however,

accomplished, even when it is given the stimulus of connection with an "activity."

The latest *Handbook of Suggestions* (1947 Edition) may here be quoted—

On arrival at the Junior School the pupils will begin, no doubt, to write short and simple exercises of various types. But this is not a process which need be hurried; written composition is generally begun too soon and practised too often. Too much of it should not be required until the children can write easily in

the mechanical sense, and long exercises should not be demanded.

It would be unreasonable to say that children should not begin to express themselves in writing until they feel the need to do so; many would not feel any such need until too late. But the suggestion does contain this truth, that children should feel that what they write has some point and purpose; they should not be set to write on topics quite unconnected with anything that they have been doing, seeing, reading, or discussing. If the material that they read matures into active discussion lessons, the transition to brief written exercises will be natural and easy. They can answer briefly in writing questions about the meaning of what they have read. They can be asked to deduce something further from a passage that they have been discussing and to express it in a sentence. They can deny statements in their reading and find a reason for doing so. They can begin the practice of dramatization by writing out the dialogue implicit in a brief episode of a story.

### *The Old Method*

The first appearance of "composition" in the time-tables of the Elementary Schools will be recalled by some of the older teachers—"When written composition first appeared in the Elementary School programme it generally took the form of reproduction by the children of a short passage which they had listened to, or studied, till they had practically got it by heart." (*Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers*.) Let it be added that the passage here mentioned was usually a "story" or anecdote, and that books of suitable "stories" were forthcoming from all publishers of school books. The method was simple: the story was read several times; spellings, phrases, "capitals," allusions, and even jokes were solemnly dissected with the help of the blackboard, and the result was a series of reproductions, amazingly uniform in quality, frequently impeccable in writing, spelling, and punctuation, but void of all freedom and originality of treatment. Yet the method, admirably suited for mass production, persisted well into the twentieth century, and no doubt still survives in odd corners of the country.

### *The Reaction*

In the reaction against dull, mechanical methods such as these, coupled with the spread of more reading material, and an increasing freedom for teachers to evolve new and more sensible methods, there followed a tendency on the

part of all teachers to require free composition and original work at a very early age. Imaginary topics, especially "autobiographies," raged through our schools with the all-embracing and devastating intensity of a prairie fire. Gradually, but only gradually, in this craze for originality, did teachers, especially teachers of Juniors, begin to realize that, with many pupils, they were requiring from them the production of bricks for which no straw existed; that original work on imaginary topics is the highest and most technical form of "composition"; that few children were really capable of such work; and that many more suitable exercises existed which the teachers in their zeal for the new freedom were altogether neglecting. So far as Junior pupils are concerned, it is fair to remember that "original composition, in any real sense of the word, should not be required of these younger children except by way of an occasional experiment. Before they can be expected to find the ideas and also the language for their written composition exercises they should be given subjects in which the ideas, and, as a rule, the language too, are more or less ready to their hand, so that their task is mainly one of arrangements and selection, in itself a very difficult task for younger children." (*Official Suggestions*.) The late Hardress O'Grady, in his admirable little treatise on composition, entitled *Matter, Form, and Style*, emphasized very cogently the differing nature of each of these three elements, and teachers would do well to remember that a "composition" embraces all three, and that it is useless to expect "form" or "style" in a composition if the underlying basis of interesting content or "matter" is absent. Clearly, from this aspect, the older method of faithful reproduction and the newer method of composition which is at once original and free will represent two extremes between which all the more reasonable methods will be found. Lastly, in our general criticism of the attempts of teachers to obtain, too early and too often, complete compositions from their Junior pupils, it may be stated that such teachers have been misled by the rounded beauty of a good "Essay" and have forgotten that the utmost "composition" which can be obtained from the average

pupil will consist of a brief paragraph, sometimes consisting of but a few sentences.

It will, therefore, be our task for the remainder of this chapter to indicate the nature of the written exercises which may be set to Juniors, and the range of topics which are available.

### *Composition in Secondary Schools*

At the outset we have to call definite attention to the methods adopted in this subject in our Grammar Schools as contrasted with the methods in vogue in Primary and Modern Schools. In our Grammar Schools, "composition" in its accepted sense does not figure very largely in the Junior Forms. Yet the average Grammar School pupil, on reaching the Senior stage, can usually write English with much greater freedom, accuracy, and originality than can a pupil of the same age in the ordinary Secondary Modern School. One possible cause of this is that the Grammar School pupil has had, sometimes over a series of years, constant practice in written English or "composition" in the form of answers to "Homework" questions in various school subjects. This simple method of writing answers to questions, arising out of oral or conversational lessons, should be used more and more in our Junior Schools. The method is easily applicable to numerous lessons, such as Scripture, history, geography, and Nature study, and the constant practice of *writing* answers to simple questions set on the subject-matter of such lessons is composition of the most valuable, incidental, and natural kind. These exercises will serve a number of purposes. They are excellent forms of revision, revealing to the teacher the extent of the knowledge or ideas possessed by each individual pupil in a more definite manner than any oral revision can do.

### *Composition and Reading*

The method of question and answer is particularly applicable to *English* lessons, especially *Reading* lessons, and it is not too much to say that, with the younger pupils, most of the exercises in composition should arise quite naturally out of the *Reading* lesson. This answer-

ing of specific questions, arising out of the subject-matter read, is now recognized as a valuable method of testing the pupil's power of comprehending what he has read. The questions thus set may take many forms, but the most useful exercises in pure composition will arise when such questions deal with the *content* of the matter read rather than with its language or style. The *Common-Sense English Course* (Pitman) indicates, in every lesson of the Primary books, how this method of giving incidental practice in composition, arising out of the intensive study of an extract in prose or verse, may be applied, and some well-known and successful teachers even contend that the *whole* of the teaching and practice of written composition should be based upon the pupil's reading. The great advantage of the method is that the pupil has ready to hand, in the subject-matter read, all the *matter* he needs for his composition, and is thereby enabled to concentrate on the language and form of his written work; while, finally, if the matter read or studied is of itself the best of its kind, then the pupil is insensibly learning from the best models, thereby forming a "taste" in both the reading and the writing of his mother tongue, which will be of inestimable value to him in after life. This written composition arising out of the reading lesson is analogous to the re-telling method in oral composition.

### *Direct Teaching*

So far we have emphasized the importance of the informal, incidental, and indirect approach to the teaching of written English and composition. This is not to be taken to mean that no direct teaching on this subject is advisable. The latest *Handbook of Suggestions* (1947 Edition) is clear and helpful on this point—

Some direct teaching will save time and repeated explanations. There will be abundant practice, for example, in the use of the full stop and the capital letter, and later on in the use of the relative pronoun and of the inverted relative, of quotation marks and question marks. Such practice need not be purely formal, or without its element of fun or provocation to thought. It should never become merely tedious and it should progress by single steps. It is closely related to the question of the teacher's correction. This should be directed to substance as well as to

form; it should deal with statements of fact, with matters of taste, and with the sense of orderliness. Where it is concerned with grammar and construction, it will not overwhelm the child with details, but will emphasize particular errors at a particular time.

The formal English practice indicated above will take account, no doubt, of the difficulties and the lapses which the written work of the class exhibits. With regard to the children's own diction in the wider sense, the teacher may find dealing with it a task of some delicacy. He will avoid trying to force it too much into a conventional mould; he will welcome any instance of vigour and originality in expression, even if it be not technically correct, and he will be chary of condensing language because it savours of colloquial speech. The children will learn in time when such language is suitable and when it is not; and they will come to realize that what may be appropriate in writing a dialogue or a conversation would be inappropriate in a piece of straightforward composition.

### *"At Random"*

Teachers will of necessity agree with the strictures in the second of these extracts—strictures which, unfortunately, are true of many of the exercises in composition which are constantly set to-day, and we propose, accordingly, to deal with each criticism in order, and to endeavour to point out the methods by which some of the dangers here indicated may be avoided.

In these official criticisms it is possible that the words which will be most resented by the conscientious teacher will be the words "at random" used in connection with the choice of topics. (The same warning is, perhaps, equally applicable to the choice of subjects or objects for the Drawing Lesson.) It is, however, fair to state that most teachers to-day do not select subjects either in drawing or in composition "at random," but according to a definite plan. The experienced teacher has long learned to group topics for composition according as they deal with description, or narration, or reflection, etc., or are to be cast in expository or conversational or letter form. There usually is a scheme behind the apparently casual choice, but the teacher's difficulty is, of course, that of determining the *order* in which the various groups of topics should be practised, and the proportionate amount of time to be devoted to each. Thus teachers, and even training college lecturers, will debate, seriously and at length, whether "Narration" or "De-

scription" should be first dealt with in the teaching of Junior composition, and the working teacher who attempts to give regular practice in both aspects is accordingly always liable to this "random" charge of haphazard, aimless selection. In the same way the formalist and technician will debate solemnly the relative merits of beginning the teaching of composition with the *sentence* as the unit of study, or with the *paragraph* as the unit.

To the working teacher many of these discussions appear rather remote and academic, since in his (her) daily work in this subject he (she) is more concerned in avoiding the deadly monotony of the traditional composition lesson so grimly sketched above, with its weary succession of half-completed attempts and its endless round of marking, marking, marking.

It is, then, to help such teachers that we shall attempt the difficult and somewhat paradoxical task of indicating how they may introduce into their method that logical sequence which is so desirable, and that infinite variety which is so necessary.

Most teachers agree that, so far as oral composition is concerned, narration, or the relation of a story or incident heard, read, or witnessed, is the simplest form of exercise with young pupils, and, as such, is the best starting point for *written* composition. On the other hand, many teachers believe that in *written* composition, while a certain power of narration may rightly be assumed, the initial emphasis should be laid upon the cultivation of good powers of *description*. Accordingly we shall proceed to discuss the various exercises now in common use for the purpose of giving our pupils this necessary power of good description.

### *Exercises in Description*

Descriptive exercises are of every conceivable kind, from simple accurate description of articles and events to the most poetical and lyrical description of beauty in all its infinite forms. The latter can hardly be expected to any high degree from Juniors, but in the end the exercises must lead to the choice of the most suitable language in every case, and in this sense all description has a common element, viz.

it should be adequate, accurate, and suitable for the thing described.

At the earliest stage the pupils may write a few sentences to describe their town or village, their homes, their gardens (if they have any); their brothers and sisters, their school, even themselves or their teachers; anything which looms large and really important in the child's world. If the child lives in urban surroundings exercises may be set in connection with street scenes, shops, railway stations, and all the endless variety of life in a city. In the description of events, such as civic ceremonies, pageants, holidays, sports of every kind, description and narration will frequently be merged into each other. The essential requirements at this stage will be the fullness, adequacy, and suitability of the language used.

But, while the description should be as truthful as possible, too much should not be expected from the average pupil, for frequently the result will be but a few disconnected sentences. Much depends upon the attitude of the young writer to the work. If the exercise is merely considered to be one of a routine kind, to be "marked" and "returned," the work may be colourless, but the task will be found to take new zest and vitality if it is occasionally cast in some such form as "Write a paragraph for the School Magazine describing a school play, or football match, etc., etc. The idea of writing something which will be *really read by others*, even read for *pleasure*, enables the young writer to view his efforts from an entirely new angle. Again, fullness and accuracy may be intensified by requiring a description, e.g. of the town or village, to be written for a stranger who has never visited it, or of a snow-storm for a person who has never experienced one, or of a game for one who has never seen it played. All these, and many other devices, may be used to cultivate accurate coherent powers of description. From this angle, description, depending as it does upon clear observation and perception, is of a higher mental order than mere narration or story-telling, which depends mainly upon memory or imagination. As a good deal of everyday intercourse consists of descriptions, it is worth cultivating in children the power to use the full range of their vocabulary.

### Range of Subjects

These descriptions of familiar objects and scenes, which form the earliest exercises, are inexhaustible. Still confining ourselves to direct child-experience, we may require them to write about their pets, the flowers, the trees, the birds, insects, the animals, wild or domesticated, indeed, all the wonderful world of Nature. Here again the skill of the teacher appears in the way the topic is "set" or suggested to the pupils. Personal choice may be permitted, as in the exercise "Describe the spring (summer, autumn) flowers that you like best," or we may require more accurate analysis as in "Describe how a daffodil differs from a tulip," and lastly we may rise to the lyrical note in asking for a fine description of a woodland full of bluebells, of a glade full of primroses, or a garden fragrant with roses. Here the work may go hand in hand with the Nature reading, both of prose and verse, and the pupil's work may occasionally be contrasted with the work of mature minds and experienced adult writers. Again, the out-of-school life of the pupil, the life of Saturdays and Sundays, and especially of holidays, will afford endless topics either for narrative description or descriptive narrative. Most teachers have at times employed such old favourites as "How I spent last Saturday," or "What I usually do on Sundays," or "How I spent our last half-holiday," or "The day in our holidays that I liked best." Holidays, indeed, afford innumerable topics—at home, at the seaside, very occasionally abroad, journeys by rail or steamer, or motor-bus, or bicycle—the seaside, the country—anything within the child's actual experience may be utilized. Next we have the vast field of the weather and the seasons. Natural phenomena, such as storms and floods, thunder and lightning, snow and ice, and all the ordinary vagaries of English weather may serve for endless composition exercises, while the seasons may be utilized in a remarkable variety of settings. Thus, to take one season only, viz. Spring, we may ask for a description of "Spring Flowers," or of "The first fine day of Spring," or of "Rural signs of Spring," or of a glorious brisk March day, a soft, genial April day, or a warm, sunny May day. Again, we may particularize, and

ask for a description of a garden in Spring, or of a bed of crocuses, or of the coming of the birds, or of the annual miracle of the new green of the trees. Every season provides its own selection of topics, and the teacher's only difficulty is that of choice.

A type of descriptive exercise which enjoys some popularity in schools is that indicated by "Write a description of a day in the life of . . .," the subject to be dealt with being anything real or imaginary, person or animal, from a policeman, or a postman, to a blind man's dog. This type of description calls for greater judgment than the exercises previously described, and requires greater powers of selection and generalization. Of a similar type are the exercises which ask for a description of the *work* of a farmer, or a coal-miner, or of any of the great world of workers. Here, purely personal experiences shade imperceptibly into knowledge gained indirectly from reading and conversation. Thus a pupil may be able to describe fairly accurately the life of a sailor, or coal-miner, without any actual experience of either. This reproduction of knowledge acquired indirectly may lead the teacher into errors of super-artificiality, as when the poor pupil is supposed to describe, with accuracy and interest, a journey by sea from London to Australia. This may be necessary in geography, but is hardly suitable for English composition.

Lastly, there are exercises in what may be termed accurate technical descriptions, where the pupil is required to describe accurately and tersely a given object, such as a camera, or fountain-pen, or wheelbarrow, or fishing-rod.

These exercises are of real value, though anything approaching a logical definition of the object will seldom be obtained from Junior pupils. More difficult are the attempts to describe in words how a thing "works," e.g. a clock, a camera, an electric bell, or a motor-car. These "defining" exercises may occasionally be varied by requiring the description to be in *riddle* form, the object not being named, but being so described as to be recognizable. In this group of accurate technical description we may include the description of definite actions such as "Describe how you would lay and light a fire" (or make a bed, or clean a pair of boots),

and in the action group may be included the description of how games are played, whether individual or "organized."

In leaving the subject of description, it should be noted that all good description depends upon the careful choice of words, especially *describing* words or adjectives, and accordingly, simultaneously with the more positive exercises indicated above, the teacher should find time, in the period devoted to language study, for endless shorter exercises in the use of adjectives, synonyms, and descriptive phrases, and in the choice and use of words most suitable for any given occasion.

### *Narration*

From description to narration, or from narration to description, is an easy step at the Junior stage. In the Infants' School the pupils should have had ample oral practice in the telling of simple stories. Most of these stories will be reproductions of stories heard or read in the various oral lessons. This same material is available in the Junior School for exercises in written narration. The exercises may be based upon simple fairy stories, Bible stories, or narratives heard or read in such lessons as English and history. All that is necessary is that the narrative shall be full, coherent, and as vivacious as possible. In dealing with these stories, simple attempts at introducing conversation or dramatic action should be encouraged. Children *will* introduce this material if they are not frowned upon, and the difference between a real live story of this kind and a dull colourless recital of the usual uninspired character is most marked.

### *New Ways of Setting Exercises*

Again, still using this simple material of stories well-known to the children, we may maintain and quicken the interest of the pupils by requiring the story to be told from another point of view. Thus the reproduction of the story of Red Riding Hood becomes at once different and novel if the pupil is asked to tell the story as the *wolf* might have told it. Here, too, even the grandmother might tell the story—up to a point—and as a test of intelligence the pupils



### A NURSERY RHYME GARDEN PARTY

*A picture of this type may be used for exercises set in a number of different ways, both oral and written, e.g.—*

What do you know about any two of the people in this picture?

Write (or tell) what you think Bo-Peep is saying.

Imagine a conversation between the pig and the sheep.

Pretend you are the boy looking over the wall, and describe what you see.

Imagine yourself a bird in the tree, and describe the garden party: try to keep in mind what a bird would consider most important.



might explain why the grandmother could not tell the *whole* story. Even if we confine ourselves to fairy tales, the variety of these different points of view is astonishing, since each person or animal in the story may, in turn, act as narrator. Thus we may ask for the account of "Cinderella" as the Prince, or as an ugly sister, might tell it; of "Jack and the Beanstalk" as Jack's mother might tell it; of "The Ugly Duckling" as related by the old hen, or of "Puss in Boots" as told by the miller's son. This projection of personality is but another attractive form of the age-old "Let us pretend," so beloved by children. But from whatever angle the story is reproduced, the basic material, in the form of the original story, is a safe foundation upon which to frame our exercises in written composition. Somewhat more difficult are those exercises in "Let us suppose," which require the invention of most of the matter of the composition. All will depend, in these cases, upon the attractiveness and suggestiveness of the wording of the exercise. We have found, for instance, that average pupils will make a brave effort to produce something really original if the exercise is worded in some such way as "Suppose that you are a mouse in a trap. Tell how you were caught," or "Suppose that you are a fox. Tell how you raided a hen-roost for your dinner," or "Suppose that you are a canary in a cage. Tell how a cat tried to catch you and eat you." We need not continue—every teacher will be able to supply innumerable attractive examples. Somewhat harder, because less dramatic, are exercises of the following type: "Suppose that you are a robin. Tell how you find food in winter," or "Suppose that you are a swallow. Tell how you build your nest." Still more difficult are those exercises which require the young pupil to project a personality into an inanimate object, as in such examples as "Suppose you are a railway engine. Tell the work you have to do in a day," or "Suppose that you are a tall tree. Tell how you grew up." From exercises such as these to the complete autobiography of an object is but a short step. It is possible that in the past these exercises, cast in the form: "Write the life story of a . . . as told by itself," have been used too often, to the neglect of other equally useful and attractive exercises, "pupil is required to complete the story. These

and it is certain that, for the average Junior pupil, anything in the nature of a really complete autobiography, even of the simplest object, is an almost impossible task. Teachers are accordingly advised that it is better to require the narration of some simple incident in, or part of, a complete "life," than to expect anything approaching completeness in an autobiography. In saying this, we do not deny that children, even at the Junior stage, delight in the contrast between youth and age, and will attempt gladly to give the life story of an old horse, or of an old pair of boots, or of a worn-out cricket bat, or of an old arm-chair, as told by the objects themselves. Examples such as these are preferable, for Juniors, to the famous example of the autobiography of a penny.

### *Suggestions for "Story" Exercises*

We pass from these autobiographies or story-monologues to the more general type of exercise which requires the pupil actually to invent or "compose" a complete story. This exercise again may take various forms. In its first and most artificial form, the skeleton of the story is supplied by the teacher, in a few words or phrases, and the pupil is required to expand this skeleton into a complete and readable story. Here, of course, everything depends upon the "skeleton" story supplied. To take some simple examples, "Boys—apple—tree—dog—farmer" will suggest a good story to most, while "ship—fire—boats—uninhabited island" will readily interest the more adventurous and imaginative. This type of exercise in "guided" narrative may very well be varied from time to time by the introduction of an illustration, or illustrations, which "tell" an obvious story, though not in words—the exercise or test consisting of the writing of a composition based on the pictures. But, as we have stated, this exercise is slightly tinged with artificiality, and certainly the invention of suitable "skeletons" requires more time and forethought than most teachers are able to give to the subject. In contrast to this building of a story round a given framework, we now have many exercises where the *opening* of a simple story is supplied, and the

"pupil is required to complete the story. These

openings may be simple or elaborate, but in every case they should provide sufficient material to suggest to the pupil a possible ending. This type of exercise may be reversed, and the pupils may be asked to supply the *beginning* of a story which will "fit" a certain ending supplied by the teacher. Lastly, in these narrative exercises, we may supply merely the *title* of the story which the pupils are to write, and it is in the selection of suitable titles for stories that the skill of the teacher is revealed. They should be as apt as possible: "My busy day" by the horse in the hay wagon, or "What I see from my Cage" by a parrot, or "The children in our house" as told by a dog, or "What I see and hear at night," told by Mr. Owl, are more likely to produce interesting descriptive narratives than bald directions such as "Write a ghost story" or "Write an adventure story." On the other hand, titles such as "My most wonderful dream," or "The boy who was always sleepy," or "How we won the match," though more difficult, will frequently produce quite spirited efforts. Finally, in our search for suitable titles we need not, as teachers, rely solely upon our own invention, for frequently the daily newspapers contain "Head-lines" and "sub-heads" which will form admirable "skeletons" or titles for stories for composition, if care be taken to exclude the more sensational items.

### *Conversations*

Though, as a general rule, description and narration will comprise the bulk of the exercises in written composition for Junior pupils, these two aspects of the subject do not exhaust the topics which may be set, nor the literary form in which they may be cast. Two other aspects are bound to figure prominently in every modern syllabus—viz. Conversations and Letter-writing.

An imaginative child loves to throw his composition into the form of a dialogue or conversation. These exercises may take very simple forms at first, such as "Write down the actual words used in the following: Tom's mother asked him why he was so late, and he replied that he had missed the train," or "Write questions to which the following answers might be given," or "Fill in the blanks in the following

conversation" (certain questions and answers being omitted). Again, we may suggest a very simple topic such as "Write the conversation which might take place between a bus driver and his wife at tea after a very wet (or frosty or foggy) day, in which he describes his experiences."

In imaginative exercises such as these it is better to give the pupil a clear lead as to the subject of the conversation. Usually subjects of strong contrast will prove most fruitful, such as conversations between: a race-horse and a cart-horse; a motor-car and a stage coach; a sailor of Nelson's time and a sailor of to-day; a bird in a cage and a bird in a tree; a pen and a pencil; a gramophone and a wireless set; a silver spoon and a kitchen fork; a bat and an owl living in the same church tower; a rabbit and a mole; indeed, any subjects animate or inanimate, whose lives or points of view are sufficiently contrasted to provoke a reasonable conversation or discussion. Debatable topics may be very well discussed in this form. Thus the relative merits of town and country life may profitably be written out in the form of a conversation between a country child and a town child. Topics which may be similarly treated are: day schools and boarding schools; seaside and country places of holiday; winter and summer as times of holiday; in general, any topic which offers possibilities of oral discussion and conversation between two or more pupils may also be set as an exercise in written composition in the form of an imaginary conversation. Nor need the old material of the Infants' School be discarded in these imaginary conversations, for we may occasionally require our pupils to write an imaginary conversation between, for example, Cinderella and her Fairy Godmother after the ball, or between Alice in Wonderland and the largest of the Three Bears, or between Dick Whittington and Jack the Giant Killer. Finally, as an introduction to the writing of real drama, we may occasionally ask for more historical topics, i.e. imaginary conversations between famous contemporary characters in history, and in this connection it is well to remember that the mythical and doubtful incident of Alfred and the cakes is not the *only* topic suitable for an "imaginary conversation." Incidentally,

attention will be drawn to the conversations which occur so frequently in the pupil's reading, and the ordinary English conventions of "raised commas" and capital letters will be inculcated by these methods without very much difficulty. Reviewing the subject generally, it will be found that, with most pupils, these attempts at reproducing conversations are intensely popular, and pupils, in addition to the direct exercises outlined above, should be encouraged to introduce conversations into their narratives wherever possible. *Æsop* and many other later writers have shown the dramatic possibilities of a tale told in this way, and teachers may well use these and other fables as models of what *can* be done.

### *Letter Writing*

Letter writing has long had a place in the composition exercises of the ordinary school, but it is only of late years that the subject has been considered in any way suitable for Junior pupils. Formerly the practice was confined to the last year or two of school life, when the exercises were formal and rigid, consisting almost entirely of those somewhat pathetic "letters of application" for posts of employment on leaving school. Gradually, however, it has been remembered by teachers, even by Junior teachers, that, of all forms of composition, letter writing is the form most constantly practised by ordinary people in ordinary life. Now letter writing has two main aspects; in the first place there is the *form* of the letter including the "setting out" of such things as address, date, salutation, and signature, with the proper mode of addressing the envelope, and in the second place there is the *subject-matter* or *content* of the actual letter, which may vary from the strictly formal and official to the very informal and friendly. Teachers, as a rule, are *meticulously careful* as to the *form* of the letter, and are frequently over-precise in their requirements as to subject-matter. Their anxiety as to the *form* is justifiable, for just as a person's education may fairly be assessed by his speech or dress, so even more surely may he be judged by the letters he writes. Hence it is that teachers very properly insist upon *correct form* in letter writing, especially in the proper

mode of address both of envelope and of salutation. In dealing with Juniors, however, these niceties and conventions need not worry us too much, for most of the exercises will consist only of the friendly, informal type of letters such as are written and received by parents and children, or by relatives and friends. Here they will learn to write Dear Father, or Mother, or Uncle, or John, and will not be required to distinguish between "Sir," "Dear Sir," and "My dear Sir," or between "Yours faithfully," "Yours sincerely," and "Yours affectionately." These shades of distinction and all the other finer conventions of letter writing may well be left to the Secondary School. In the same way, while it is important that pupils should learn *when* letters are to be written, as well as *how* to write them, too much time need not be spent, at the Junior stage, on the etiquette of social intercourse, such as invitations, replies to invitations, letters of thanks, and many others. On the other hand, the pupils may, even at the Junior stage, attempt to write the ordinary letters which their mothers or their fathers write to tradesmen and others in the ordinary routine or emergencies of life.

In all this work it is important that the subject, or the occasion of the letter to be written, should be full and real to the child. Here again much will depend upon the form in which the exercise is cast. To take a simple example: we may ask the pupil to write a letter to an uncle indicating an appropriate gift for an approaching birthday. Such an exercise gains immeasurably if cast in the form of "Suppose that to-morrow is your birthday. Write the letter you would like to receive from a kind uncle." A few enterprising examiners for "Vice Places" have in recent years combined both letter and reply in the form of printing a *reply* and requiring the candidate to write an original letter which could produce such a *reply*. Endless occasions for letters may be invented, such as letters to absent or sick friends or relatives, letters to schoolmasters and pastors, letters to children abroad, letters to tradesmen, letters of complaint to police, post office, or railway, letters of thanks for services rendered—indeed all the occasions upon which letters may conveniently be sent in everyday life.

### Correction

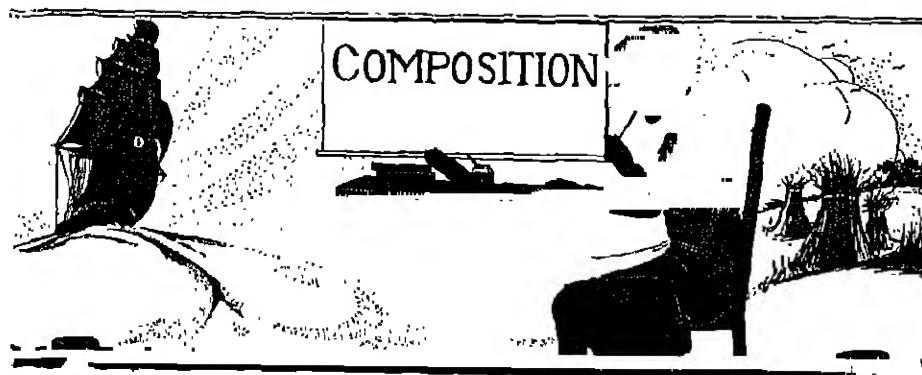
In the treatment of Junior composition outlined above, but little has been said as to the vexed question of the *correction* of exercises in English. This very serious matter of errors and their correction is perhaps better considered as a part of general school method, but errors will continue to occupy a prominent part in the teaching of composition, and, accordingly, no treatment of Junior composition would be satisfactory which did not contain some reference to the difficult subject of mistakes and their correction. Possible mistakes in oral composition have already been briefly alluded to, but mistakes in written composition are even more insistent, for here every possible type of mistake occurs: errors in punctuation, spelling, and grammar, as well as the more difficult and more important errors in treatment, style, and taste. Fortunately, at the Junior stage, the efforts of the pupil will seldom be of undue length, and the labour of correction will accordingly be lighter. Teachers have evolved many ingenious methods and systems of marking to enable them to keep pace with the work of a large class, but most of these, at the best, merely deal with obvious errors of spelling, grammar, and form. More important, and much more difficult, is the discussion of a "composition" *individually* with a pupil, in the endeavour to indicate how the composition *might easily be improved*. Much correction and advice of this kind may be given during the actual writing of the exercise, though some teachers would avoid any kind

of disturbance to the pupil during the actual period of writing. Above all, in this more personal oral method of correction the teacher must use a full measure of sympathetic encouragement, and must avoid any attempt to make any public enjoyment out of a sensitive pupil's "howler" or unintentional mistake.

### Conclusion

In concluding this article on the teaching of Composition in the Junior School, we should do well to remind ourselves of the exact position of this work in the child's education as a whole.

Our pupils should come to us from the Infants' Schools able and willing to *talk* fluently and coherently upon anything within their knowledge or experience. It is our task in the Junior years to maintain and develop this power of free speech, and to enable them, by constant suitable practice, to translate this ready speech into clear, concise, and coherent writing. While "Composition" in its widest, fullest sense, will hardly be obtained or expected from Junior pupils, we can, without difficulty, teach our pupils to express their simple thoughts in writing, and thus we can send on to the Secondary School, or higher form of education, pupils who have not only mastered the more mechanical aspects of speaking, reading, and writing, but are also able to use these tools to clarify their own thoughts, and to express in "Composition" something which will give pleasure both to themselves and to those who read it.





## THE TEACHING OF GRAMMAR

THE attitude of teachers towards the teaching of Grammar in schools, especially in Junior Schools, has undergone steady modification during the past few decades. As a result, formal grammar, treated as a separate subject and divorced from English in its wider sense, has largely disappeared from time-tables, for it is now recognized that the old rigid treatment had little or no effect on either English composition or the appreciation of English literature. In this connection the limit of absurdity would appear to have been reached when pupils were required to "parse" and "analyse" their way through such a gem of English as Gray's "Elegy."

But the question still remains as to what parts of grammar, if any, shall be taught in schools, and after careful investigation, the Consultative Committee in their "Report on the Primary School" (1931) pronounced as follows—

An irreducible minimum of pure grammar should be taught as part of the English course.

The pupils must be made conscious of the functions of words and of the correct structure of the sentence, and must learn the grammatical terms arising therefrom.

Unfortunately, it is unlikely that teachers will ever agree as to what comprises this "irreducible minimum" in a Junior School, nor will they ever be unanimous as to how these terms and functions are best taught, except that they are now generally agreed that the old methods of learning definitions, of "picking out" parts of speech, and of parsing and analysis, are too rigid and artificial to have much educational value.

The latest *Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers* (1947 Edition) is specific upon the alleged educational value of Grammar in the Junior School—

It is only by direct contact with the spoken and

written language that the teaching of Grammar can be redeemed from the unreality and sterility which have so often accompanied its teaching in the past.

In the Junior School the study of Grammar has only a small place. The child may well become familiar with some of the simpler grammatical terms, but this does not imply the memorizing of a set of definitions. Any exercises that may be given will be all the more effective if they are not merely grammatical, but are concerned with meaning as well as with form. There is no need whatever for a separate Grammar lesson in the Junior School, and very little need for written grammatical exercises.

Upholders of the teaching of formal grammar in Junior schools usually adduce one or more of the following reasons in support of their contention—

(a) Formal Grammar, like Mathematics, has an intrinsic educational value in that it gives an excellent training in logical accuracy.

(b) Formal Grammar gives the only authoritative criteria by which a pupil may judge the corrections of his own speech and writing.

(c) Formal Grammar in English is an essential preliminary to the real study of a second language, whether ancient or modern.

Opponents of the teaching of grammar will claim that modern psychologists have long since exploded the fallacious ideas underlying (a), and that (c) is hardly a reason for burdening every child with the intricacies of formal grammar since such a small percentage ever proceed to the literary study of another language. But (b) above has always been more difficult to refute in the minds of many teachers, especially those who like to be guided by some "rules" and "conventions." It is, therefore, for these teachers that the following lists of topics have been compiled. They are based upon a concentric scheme of work in the Junior School, whereby the same topics are re-introduced and extended in succeeding years of the course. The scheme, or selections from it, may be worked in conjunction with any modern series of class-books.

## PUPILS AGED 7 TO 8 YEARS

*The Sentence*

## 1. Simple statement sentences.

Make simple sentences on well-known topics, e.g. A dog. Our baby. My painting.

## 2. Question Sentences.

Pupils ask questions and other pupils answer them.

3. From a story which contains questions and answers, the pupils are asked to write the answer to—

## (a) What question did — ask?

(b) What answer was given to the question "      ?"?

4. Write full answers to questions, e.g. Where do you live?

5. Write the questions you would ask to obtain the following answer: e.g. I found it in the street.

6. Arrange words in the correct order to make good sentences, e.g. hill the Jack went Jill and up.

7. Divide sentences into: (a) a naming part, and (b) a stating part.

8. Add a stating part to a naming part, e.g. The brook —.

9. Add a naming part to a stating part, e.g. — heard the dog growl.

*The Alphabet*

## VOWELS AND CONSONANTS

## 1. Write words beginning with consonants.

## 2. Write words beginning with vowels.

*The Use of "A" and "An"*

## 1. Place "a" or "an" before given words.

2. Insert "a" or "an" in the following spaces, e.g. — man was playing on — organ.

*Name Words (Nouns)*

## 1. CAPITALS.

(a) Write names of persons, places, days of the week, months, etc., beginning with capital letters.

(b) Insert names with capitals in blank spaces, e.g. I went to see — at — on —.

(c) Given a paragraph without capitals, pupils to rewrite, inserting capitals correctly.

## 2. SMALL LETTERS.

Pupils write a list of name words, and use each word in a sentence, e.g.—

(a) Names of kinds of food, as bread.

(b) Name words for people who do certain actions, e.g. make bread and cakes.

(c) Names of animals on a farm, parts of the face.

3. Give the name of a fruit that begins with "a," and of a fish that begins with "c."

4. Fill in the spaces with a name word beginning with each letter of the alphabet, e.g. Our baby is named—Ada Benjamin.

## 5. NAMING GAMES

Pupils describe things without naming them. Other pupils try to name them without seeing them.

*One and More Than One*

## 1. Fill in the blank spaces—

One boy but two —

One box but some —

One lady but several —

One knife but four —

Two doors but one —

Some leaves but one —

2. Select words from a list and insert in sentences, e.g. tooth, teeth. The boy's — were sound.

*Doing Words*

Write as many Doing words as you can think of to tell the noises you can make, e.g. shout, sing, and put them in sentences.

## DOING GAMES

Teacher writes a name and boys write the

names of all the actions that can be done, e.g. Men — (work, run, etc.).

### "Is" and "Are"

1. Copy sentences which contain "is" and "are."
2. Write sentences beginning with: (a) There is. (b) There are.
3. Write questions beginning: (a) Is there. (b) Are there.
4. Insert "is" or "are" in sentences, e.g.—  
The man — in the field.  
The houses — built of brick.
5. Change sentences containing "is" to sentences containing "are" and *vice versa*.

### Has, Have, Was, Were

Insert in sentences, e.g.—  
She — a skipping rope.  
We — been playing with it.  
The dogs — barking loudly.  
I — a very good writer.

### Words Used Instead of Names

I, We, they, etc.

1. Insert pronouns in sentences, e.g. Mary has a garden in which — loves to sit.
2. Put pronouns instead of names in italics and make the sentence read correctly, e.g. Fred had a ball but *Fred* lost the *ball*.

### Describing Words

1. Select the describing words in the following, e.g. beautiful white lilies.
2. Write sentences containing describing words, e.g. small, heavy.
3. Use pairs of describing words in sentences, e.g. warm and dry.
4. Apply suitable describing words to name-words, e.g. field, coat.

5. Insert suitable describing words in the spaces, e.g. We found the — house very — and —.

6. Write describing words having the same or almost the same meaning as, e.g. kind, swift.

7. Write the describing word with the correct noun, e.g. smoked fruit, sponge peel, candied hams, tinned cakes.

### Words that Tell How, When, and Where an Action is Done

1. Insert in sentences words that tell how, when, and where, e.g. badly, yesterday, there.
2. Add to sentences words that tell how, when, and where, e.g. I went—quickly, merrily, etc.

### Phrases that Tell How, When, Where

Complete sentences by adding phrases that tell how, when, or where, e.g. The girl is standing — (near the table). Fred had his breakfast — (before going to school).

Arrange phrases in the correct order to make good sentences, e.g.—

but could see nothing  
and tried to look out  
so he dressed quickly  
he jumped up  
into the garden  
and ran downstairs

### Where, Were

Insert in sentences, e.g. — — you going yesterday?

### Their, There

Insert in sentences, e.g. — hats must be hung —.

## PUPILS AGED 8 TO 9 YEARS

*The Sentence*

## 1. A Simple Statement Sentence.

Pupils write short sentences about something that is familiar to them, e.g. father, apple, any object at home, in the street, etc.

## 2. A Question Sentence.

Pupils write or ask questions in sentences, e.g. about pictures, holidays, the way to school.

## 3. A Command Sentence.

Boys give simple orders in sentences to one another, e.g. Run home quickly.

*Phrases*

Arrange groups of words to form sentences, e.g.—

nothing but wet roofs

looking out

he saw

in the morning.

*The Spoken Word*

1. From books write words actually spoken.
2. Show how the words actually spoken would be written, e.g. You are a flatterer and a rogue said the lion.

*The Simple Sentence*

## 1. Divide simple sentences into two parts—

(a) The naming part, or subject.

(b) The stating part, or predicate.

e.g. Snowdrops and crocuses bloom in spring.

2. Add a suitable stating part (or predicate) to a given naming part (or subject) to form a complete sentence, e.g. Little Jack Horner —.

3. Add a suitable subject to a given predicate to form a complete sentence, e.g. — ate up all the porridge.

4. Write sentences using each of these pairs of words—

*Naming part*

James

man

*Stating part*

threw.

sailed.

*The Use of "A" and "An"*

## 1. Place "a" or "an" before given words.

2. Complete sentences by inserting "a" or "an" in the spaces, e.g. We waited for — hour in — shop.

*Nouns, Common and Proper*

1. Put suitable nouns in blank spaces, and state whether they are common or proper.

2. For each of the common nouns given, write a proper noun, or special name, and *vice versa*, e.g.—

Boy — (John Jones).

Month — (April).

Cinderella — (girl).

Chester — (city).

3. An extract given without capitals. Rewrite, inserting capitals where necessary for the proper nouns.

4. Add a name in the space beginning with as many different letters of the alphabet as possible, e.g. We bought—(arrows, bananas). Jack went to — (Ashton, Bury, Chester).

*Nouns, Singular and Plural Number*

Change words from the singular to the plural and *vice versa*, e.g. boy, church, lady, calf, man, child, goose.

*The Apostrophe "s"*

1. Write in the short form using "'s" or "s'" e.g.—

(a) A hat for the boy.

(b) Hats for the boys.

*The Verb*

1. Write as many verbs as you can which tell—

(a) What you do at school; in the garden.

(b) The different ways you move.

(c) The noises a person makes.

2. Fill in the blanks with verbs telling the

sounds the different animals make, e.g. Horses — (neigh). Donkeys —.

### Present Time and Past Time

1. Writing sentences in the Present time and Past time.
2. Changing sentences from Present Time to Past Time and *vice versa*.

### *Is, are; Has, have; Was, were*

Insert the correct word from the above words in sentences, e.g. He — at home to-day. They — playing in the fields.

### Singular and Plural Sentences

1. Change sentences from meaning one to mean more than one and *vice versa*, e.g. She found a daisy in the field.
2. Alteration of Doing part to suit Naming part and *vice versa*, according to change of number, e.g. The book has fallen on the floor.

### Pronouns

Write pronouns we use—

- (a) When we mean ourselves, e.g. I, me, us, we, etc.
- (b) When we speak to people, e.g. you, yours.
- (c) When we speak about other people, e.g. he, him, they, etc.
- (d) When we speak about things, e.g. it.

### *The Use of "Is" and "His"*

Insert the correct word "is" or "his" in the spaces, e.g. — hat — as black as coal.

### *Adjectives (Words that Describe)*

1. Note the position, sometimes before and sometimes after the noun, e.g.—
  - (a) On fine, summer days we play in the beautiful park.
  - (b) The road was wide and long.
2. Insert adjectives in the spaces, e.g. A — dog.

3. Write suitable adjectives to describe nouns, e.g. (stormy, rainy, mild) — weather.

4. Complete sentences by adding suitable adjectives, e.g. His boots were — and —.

5. Write the describing words which mean the opposite of the following, e.g. tall, poor, big.

6. A pupil to give the name of a person, place, object, etc. Other pupils to add a suitable describing word.

### *Adjectives (Comparison)*

1. Write the three forms for adjectives, e.g. small, high.

2. Write the first and second forms for adjectives, e.g. prettiest, neatest.

3. Write, in sentences, the other two forms for adjectives in sentences, e.g.—

- (a) She was the ugliest creature.
- (b) He took the smaller piece.

### *Adjective Phrases*

1. Write sentences using phrases, e.g. cold and wet; tall and thin.

2. Change adjectives into adjective phrases and use in a sentence, e.g. hatless (without a hat).

### *Adverbs (Words that Tell How, When, and Where)*

Adverbs of manner, time, and place.

1. Insert suitable words that tell how, when, and where, e.g. The wind blew — (gently). May arrived — (yesterday). Jack went — (away).

2. Form adverbs of manner from adjectives, e.g. steady (steadily), wise (wisely).

### *Adverb Phrases*

1. Insert phrases that tell how, when, and where, etc.—

- (a) Jane did her work (in an excellent manner).
- (b) He came (in a few moments).
- (c) They lived (in the next street).

2. Write sentences using adverb phrases, e.g. under the water.

3. Change adverbs into adverb phrases, and write sentences containing them.

**"Their" and "There"**

1. Insert the right word "their" or "there" in sentences, e.g. It was not —. — father gave them a book.
2. Write sentences using—  
Is there, is their; was there, was their.  
In there, in their.  
There is; there was.  
There are, there were.

**"Where" and "Were"**

1. Use the correct word "where" or "were" in sentences, e.g.—  
(a) — are you going?  
(b) There — three bears.
2. Write questions beginning: Where, Were, Where is, Where have, etc.
3. Arrange these words to make a sentence: where, them, they, left, were, I.

**PUPILS AGED 9 TO 10 YEARS*****The Sentence (Subject and Predicate)***

1. Divide simple sentences into subject and predicate.
2. Add a suitable predicate to the subject, e.g. after sunset, nearly all the birds and beasts —.
3. Find a suitable subject for a given predicate, e.g. — shouted aloud with glee at the sight.

***Capitals and Punctuation***

1. Write—  
(a) Names and addresses, e.g. of your aunt.  
(b) Names of months beginning with J.  
(c) Days of week beginning with S.
2. Re-write, correctly, sentences in which capitals and stops are omitted, e.g. we shall go to brighton on the last wednesday in may.

***Words Actually Spoken***

1. Put quotation marks in sentences to show the actual words spoken, e.g. Oh! come back, come back, said Tom, you beautiful creature.
2. Complete the following, giving an actual question and answer—  
—— asked the man.  
The boy replied —.

***Arrange Words and Phrases to Form the Best Sentences***

1. Arrange words to form the best sentence, e.g. pegs boys their the hats on hang.

2. Arrange phrases to form the best sentences

e.g.—  
what she did  
a little bit of stick  
not knowing  
she picked up  
and held it out.

***Choosing Suitable Words***

1. Fill in spaces with the most suitable word, either selected from a given list or from pupils' own choice.
2. The last word in several lines of verse is omitted. Pupils to insert words which will rhyme with the words left at the ends of the other lines.
3. Insert suitable words, e.g.—  
As heavy as —.  
As — as a bat.

***Nouns (Proper and Common Nouns)***

1. Write nouns which are the names of—  
(a) Things we wear.  
(b) Things we use at the tea table.
2. Write a sentence using several nouns, e.g. dog, bone, kennel.
3. Write a question sentence using several nouns, e.g. girl, letter, table.
4. Write proper nouns, and then write the common nouns to which they belong, and vice versa, e.g.—

<i>Proper Noun</i>	<i>Common Noun</i>
Manchester	— (city).
— (Europe).	continent.

*Singular and Plural Number*

1. Give the plural of nouns, e.g. boy, glass, baby, knife, hoof.
2. Insert singular and plural words in sentences.

*The Apostrophe "s" (Ownership)*

1. Write sentences using these words, e.g. lady's, ladies', dog's, dogs'.
2. Write in the short form using the apostrophe "s"—
  - (a) in the singular: the tail of the horse.
  - (b) in the plural: hats for gentlemen.

*Verbs*

1. Write sentences containing suitable verbs for the nouns given—e.g. legs, pen, broom.
2. Write as many verbs as you can which tell the noises different animals and birds make, e.g. pigs —; sparrows —.

*Nouns and Verbs*

1. Write sentences showing how the same word can be used as both a noun and a verb, e.g. looks, love, smell, ring.
2. Form verbs from nouns, and write sentences containing the noun and the verb, e.g. builder, typist.
3. Form nouns from verbs, e.g. dwell, run.

*Verbs (Present, Past, and Future Tenses)*

Re-write sentences, changing them from one tense to another tense, e.g. change from past tense to present tense—

"Tom, Tom, the Piper's son  
Stole a pig, and away he ran."

*Singular and Plural Sentences*

Change sentences from—

- (a) Singular to plural, e.g. a thrush is singing in the tree.
- (b) Plural to singular, e.g. They were hanging their hats on pegs.

*Adjectives*

1. Substitute adjectives for those given in the selection, e.g. It was a nice picture.
2. Write suitable adjectives to use in describing something, e.g. a dog, a house.
3. Insert suitable adjectives in the spaces, e.g. The — farmer saw some — boys in his — field.
4. Write adjectives which have a meaning—
  - (a) The opposite of other adjectives, e.g. late, cool.
  - (b) Similar or almost similar to other adjectives, e.g. beautiful, large.

*Adjectives and Nouns*

1. Form adjectives from nouns, e.g. health, trouble.
2. Use the same word as an adjective and a noun, e.g. brass, paper.

*Adjective Phrases*

1. Select adjective phrases, e.g. The man was without hat and coat.
2. Write adjective phrases instead of the words in italics, e.g.—
  - (a) He carried a *steel* sword.
  - (b) The boy was *breathless*.
3. Write sentences containing adjective phrases, e.g. with scarlet cheeks.
4. Change adjective phrases into adjectives.

*Comparison of Adjectives*

1. Write the three different forms of adjectives, e.g. cool, big, heavy.
2. Insert the correct form of the adjective, e.g. This is the — of the two apples.

*Personal Pronouns*

1. Insert correct pronoun, e.g. insert "I" or "me." Either you or — must be wrong.
2. Change sentences from the singular to the plural form, and *vice versa*, e.g. She was telling him to go away.
3. Write sentences showing how to use pairs of pronouns, e.g. You and I; you and they, etc.

*Is, His*

Insert "is" and "his" correctly in the sentence: — — the best writing?

*Who, Which, That*

1. Select the correct word, "who, which, or that," to put in the sentence, e.g. This is the man — killed the rat.

2. Join pairs of sentences by using who, which, or that, e.g. He lived with his uncle. His uncle was a miser.

*Adverbs (Manner, Time, Place)*

1. Write suitable adverbs in the spaces, and state the kind of adverb used, e.g. The birds sang — in the bushes.

2. Form adverbs from adjectives, and use both words in sentences, e.g. kind, pretty.

3. Use adverbs in sentences of your own making, e.g. formerly, backwards.

*Adverb Phrases*

1. Use adverb phrases in sentences, e.g. clean out of the water; before the time of the Romans.

2. Select adverb phrases and state what kind they are, e.g.—

Pussy-cat mole jumped over a coal  
And in her best petticoat burnt a great hole.

3. Find phrases which have the same meaning as adverbs and write sentences containing them, e.g. cleverly, heatedly.

4. Find an adverb which has the same meaning as an adverb phrase, e.g. At a slow pace. With a great deal of noise.

*Their, There*

1. Insert the correct word "their" or "there" in the spaces, e.g. It was — that they lost — way.

2. Write sentences using: are their; were their; there were; is their.

*As, Has*

1. Insert the correct word "as" or "has" in the spaces, e.g. — he — not come I shall not wait.

2. Write sentences using—  
has he, as he, as soon as, as he has, as I was.

*To, Too, Two*

Use the right word, "to," "too," or "two" in sentences, e.g. It is — far — go for — apples.

## PUPILS AGED 10 TO 11 YEARS

*Analysis*

1. Divide sentences into subject and predicate, e.g. Tired out with his long walk, he went to sleep under the trees.

2. Add a suitable predicate to the subject, e.g. Rising with a painful effort, he —.

3. Add a suitable subject to the predicate, e.g. Then, over our heads there passed —.

4. Add extensions of the predicate to sentences, e.g. We played ball —.

5. Full analysis of simple sentences into subject, predicate, object, extension of predicate, e.g.—

King Henry forced a careless smile.

He, on a sledge, is drawn.

On the artist she fixes her eyes.

*Capitals and Punctuation*

1. Re-write, correctly, extracts, in which capitals and stops have been omitted.

2. Re-write poetry, which has been written as prose, putting a capital at the beginning of each line.

*Direct and Indirect Speech*

1. Insert quotation marks to show the words actually spoken, e.g.—

(a) Are we going at nine o'clock asked she.

(b) To-morrow, said Henry, is our last day at school.

2. Change from the indirect to the direct form,

e.g. He said that he was going by the nine o'clock train.

3. Change from the direct to the indirect form, e.g. The girl asked "What is the price of the hat, please?"

### *Nouns (Common and Proper)*

1. Write common nouns which are the names of, e.g. animals, birds, flowers, etc.

2. Write proper nouns which are the names of, e.g. towns, people, ships, etc.

3. Give the common noun of the class of things to which each of the following belongs, e.g. Monday, June, Isle of Man, Brighton.

4. Give one proper noun for each of the following, e.g. a woman, river, city.

5. Write sentences containing given nouns.

6. Complete the following by supplying the correct noun, e.g.—

(a) A litter of —.

(b) As soft as —.

7. Form nouns from other words, e.g. high, cruel, noble, poor.

### *Nouns (Singular and Plural Number)*

1. Give the plural of nouns, e.g. brass, life, cry, calf, mean, child, manservant.

2. Give the singular of nouns, e.g. miseries, women, mice.

3. Use words containing 's and s' in sentences, e.g. boy's, boys', man's, men's.

4. Change sentences from the singular form to the plural form and *vice versa*.

### *Gender*

1. Write the feminine gender of nouns, e.g. boy, man, shepherd, lion, brother, gander.

2. Write the masculine gender of nouns, e.g. widow, heroine, vixen, daughter, aunt.

### *Verbs (Present, Past, and Future Tenses)*

1. Give the different tenses of verbs, e.g. Give the past tense of I write, I run.

2. Insert the correct tense of the verb in sentences, e.g. sing, sang, sung. He — the song which is being — everywhere.

3. Comment on sentences (written by the teacher) containing forms of verbs which are used incorrectly, e.g. lie, lay, laid, lain, sit, drink, swim, hang.

4. Correct sentences, e.g. It was she who done it.

5. Change sentences from one tense to another.

### *The Verb (Transitive and Intransitive)*

1. Supply an object, e.g. The butcher sells —.

2. Insert suitable transitive verbs, e.g. The waves — the boat to pieces.

3. Complete the following, using transitive verbs, e.g. Our team —.

4. Complete the following using intransitive verbs, e.g. The birds of the air —.

### *Is, Are*

Put "is" or "are" in sentences, e.g.—

(a) James and John — here.

(b) William or Mary — going to London.

### *Was, Were*

Insert "was" or "were," e.g. I — going in the house as they — leaving.

### *Has, Have*

Insert "has" or "have" in sentences, e.g. There — been many showers to-day. The boys of this class — gone home.

### *Adjectives*

1. Write adjectives which could be used for describing, e.g.—

(a) Trees in autumn.

(b) Birds in spring.

2. Write adjectives ending in -ish, -less, -ful, and use them in sentences.

3. Write sentences showing how the same word can be used as a noun and as an adjective, e.g. fish, tin, sweet.

4. Form adjectives from nouns and write sentences containing them, e.g. gold, wood, wheat.

*Comparison of Adjectives*

1. Compare adjectives, e.g. bright, wet, funny, skilful, impossible.
2. Complete sentences by using the proper form of the adjective given in brackets, e.g. which is the (cheap) of these two books?
3. Re-write sentences correctly, e.g.—
  - (a) This boy is the taller of the three.
  - (b) He was the oldest of the two sons.

*Adjective Phrases*

1. Select adjective phrases, e.g. The little boy with the straw hat was cleverly disguised.
2. Form sentences containing adjective phrases, e.g.—
  - (a) Of great influence.
  - (b) Without a penny.
3. Insert adjective phrases in the spaces, e.g. The roar — frightened the natives.
4. Substitute an adjective phrase for an adjective, e.g. The hatless man went merrily along.
5. Substitute an adjective for an adjective phrase, e.g. Making up her mind to succeed, she struggled on.
6. Write a phrase opposite in meaning to another phrase, e.g. a bright and clever boy.

*Adverbs and Adverb Phrases:**(How) Manner*

1. Select adverbs and adverb phrases from sentences, e.g. She walked quickly with great joy.
2. Insert suitable adverbs and adverb phrases telling the manner, e.g. He gazed at him —.
3. Use adverbs or adverb phrases in sentences, e.g. slowly; in a hesitating manner.
4. Change adverbs into adverb phrases and insert them in sentences, e.g. We thought they danced *gracefully*.
5. Form adverbs from adjectives and write sentences containing them, e.g. happy, sad.

*Adverbs and Adverb Phrases:**(When) Time*

1. Write adverbs or adverb phrases telling "when"—

(a) Which could be used to begin a story, e.g. once upon a time.

(b) Which mark a definite period of time, e.g. yesterday.

2. Write adverbs having the same meaning as other adverbs or adverb phrases, e.g. occasionally; in the twinkling of an eye.

3. Use time phrases in sentences, e.g. In the days of the Romans. During the eleventh century.

*Adverbs and Adverb Phrases:**(Where) Place*

1. Add adverbs or adverb phrases to sentences e.g. She walked — (into the lady's dining-room).

2. Use place phrases in sentences, e.g. In a green and shady nook.

Select adverbs and adverb phrases from sentences and state the kind of adverb or phrase, e.g. In the morning our presents arrived at the house by post.

*As, Has*

Write the correct word "as" or "has" in the spaces: e.g. — Jane — come, we cannot read — we wished to do.

*Personal Pronouns*

1. Write all the pronouns which could be used for: a boy; a girl; a thing.

2. Write sentences containing phrases with pronouns, e.g. cleverer than I, you or I.

3. Correct sentences containing pronouns used wrongly, e.g. Every one likes their own way. Please allow my brother and I to go.

*Relative Pronouns: Who, Whose, Whom; Which, What, That*

1. Use the correct relative pronouns in sentences, e.g. The house — stands on the hill is empty.

2. Combine pairs of sentences, using the correct relative pronoun, e.g. We met some strangers. We did not like them.

*Is, His*

Write the correct word "is" or "his" in sentences, e.g. — this — coat?

*Their, There*

1. Insert "their" or "there" in the spaces, e.g. — in the wood, they lost — way.

2. Write sentences using "were there," "were their," etc.

*Prepositions*

1. Insert the correct preposition, e.g. to, with, in, into, at, between, among.

We cannot agree — you.

The soldiers landed — Liverpool.

"Pour the milk — the jug."

The boy stood — the two desks.

2. Form sentences with the same word used as an adverb and as a preposition, e.g. in, up, over.

*To, Too, Two*

Use the correct word "to," "too," or "two" in sentences, e.g. Jane cheered — loudly when her team won by — goals — one.

*Simple Joining Words: And, But, So, Or, Nor*

1. Join the following words and write a sentence containing them, e.g. cakes, biscuits, pies.

2. Use the correct joining word to combine the following sentences, e.g.—

(a) Charles went to London.

Mary went to London.

(b) Jane was very industrious.

Henry was lazy.

(c) It was a rainy day.

Annie put her mackintosh on.

3. Insert the correct joining word, e.g. William wrote with a lead pencil — James wrote with a pen.

4. Form sentences containing: either, or; neither, nor.

*Interjections*

1. Insert suitable interjections, e.g. Oh! Ah! Alas!

"— the man is dead," he moaned.

2. Write sentences containing interjections, e.g. Pooh! Bah! Ha! ha!



FIG. 4

"Speak the speech, I pray you,  
Trippingly on the tongue..."  
*Hamlet*

## SPEECH



## TRAINING

*"We wish the cultivation of speech in the Primary School to go beyond the art of correct and lucid expression. Children should learn to dislike coarse vocalization and slovenly articulation and to feel something of the dignity which is added to life when men use with care and respect the beautiful instrument of discourse which they have inherited from their forefathers."*—REPORT ON THE PRIMARY SCHOOL, 1931.

### I. Breathing

**I**F in our Speech Training lessons we are merely aiming at giving our children drill in correct sounds, a robot with a gramophone record inside it might give as good results, and we might be saved our trouble. But we want something much more. We want speech which shall be not only intelligible, but which has at any rate the beginnings of beauty in it. We want our children in every lesson to make better acquaintance with the richness and power of English words, and to get increasing delight in the practice of them. We must never, therefore, teach the sounds of the language just as sounds; they must be constantly linked with words which give them significance and life, and which stay in the memory. Rhythm and rhyme must help us at every stage, as they did our forefathers, when they made their work kilts and play kilts.

Now to make speech audible we must have voice, and to make speech varied and melodious we must have plenty of that material which makes the voice—the material of breath. Like every good workman who sometimes wants to make a small and sometimes a big article, we must have a storeroom out of which we take as much or as little as we like, according to our needs, and we must bring the material into the workroom to be made. In the workroom are our machines or our tools, and we set to work at once shaping our material. So do we with our breath material. We have to store it deeply by taking it into the bottom of our lungs, and we have to send up into our mouth chamber, which is our workshop, sometimes more and sometimes

less breath, according to our need for light tone or a big sound; when we get it into our workshop we must get it to where the tools are that can grip it and shape it, and make it a good article. Later on we shall have much to say of these tools of speech, but now we need do no more than name them, so that later on we may recognize them when we practise our vowels and consonants. We need only remember what the tools of speech are—

The lips.  
The tongue.  
The teeth and teeth ridges.  
The hard and soft palate.

We will think first, however, of our exercises for breathing.

### Breathing Exercises

First of all the windows must be opened top and bottom, for it will do much more harm than good to breathe in bad air. Next we must have our handkerchief drill, because we must have clear passages for the breath to pass through. When we begin to breathe in we must be sure that while we are, with real enjoyment, filling the lungs, we are not in any way stiffening the muscles of the neck or upper chest by raising the shoulders or throwing back the shoulder-blades. It is better to make all breathing exercises for speech purposes imaginative in their nature, because a definite command "Breathe in," "Breathe out" is apt to suggest tension and anxiety. One of the best breathing games is

that of blowing a fire at an imaginary picnic, always remembering not to allow the children to blow in each other's faces. The blowing should begin with long puffs which need the lungs to be filled deeply, and end with gentle ones when the fire is nearly red.

Quiet, deep breathing can be practised by stooping to pick an imaginary bunch of flowers, raising oneself and drawing in the scent of each one after picking, filling the lungs with quiet delight. The stooping, in this and the fire-blowing exercise, is to provide relaxation of the upper chest muscles.

The gentle drawing in, holding, and then sending out of breath can be practised later when the imaginative idea is established, to the teacher's counting of 3, 4, or 5, as the case may be—

Breathe in—counting 3.

Hold breath—counting 3.

Send out breath—counting 3, and so on.

Vigorous breathing can be practised by means of imitating the buzz of an imaginary airplane, coming from a distance, passing straight over the heads of the class, and then passing away. Many other exercises will suggest themselves to the teacher, such as the short "s—s—s" often repeated, or the long "s — — — s" of wind whistling through the rigging, or the "sh—sh—sh" of little waves and the crescendo "sh— — — sh" of a huge roller. The main thing to aim at is freedom in the upper chest muscles, and vigorous play of the lungs. In the case of the reading or speaking of a quick passage the children will often have to take breath amply and speedily, so there should be practice in a "surprise" breath: i.e. let the class imagine some one suddenly come into a room whom they had not expected—then through nose but with lips wide apart they will take in a sudden breath, hold it while the teacher counts 4, 6, or even 8, and then let it go in a sigh of pleasure. For short intake and output they can practise a little sniff through the nose as if smelling gas in a room, and then the quick sending out that naturally follows.

There will probably be many in the class with adenoid trouble. For these the exercises with quick indrawing of the breath through the nose,

with lips held lightly but firmly together, will be best.

Generally speaking, however, when the class comes to the exercise where 3 or 4 or 5 is counted for intake, the same number for holding and the same for output, practice should be given in—

(a) Taking in breath through nose with lips shut.

(b) Taking in breath through nose with lips and teeth apart.

(c) Taking in breath through the mouth.

In the last case, to avoid possible taking in of raw or not perfectly good air over the open throat, the tip of the tongue should be raised and set lightly against the upper teeth ridge. This will act as a protective. As every exercise throughout the speech training work is in some way or another a breathing exercise, what we want to do in this preliminary work is to establish deep, rhythmic breathing which the child can use quickly and freely at the natural pauses in his reading and speaking without any tightening of upper chest, throat, or jaw muscles. Hence, exercises which suggest ease and relaxation are essential.

## 2. Vowels

"By their vowels shall ye know them." This paraphrase of a well-known saying is only too true, and we teachers have realized for some time that many gifted boys and girls from our Primary Schools have passed from us at 11 by means of scholarship, and have gained a great deal of book education, only to find that if, when they get out into the world, their vowels betray them, the very doors they most deserve to enter are often shut to them. We cannot consider that our children are educated if we have not helped them in this matter.

To begin with, the teacher must be able herself to make correct sounds, because the class will learn as much from hearing as from the other two senses of touch and sight. Every child should be provided with a tiny mirror (about the size of the palm of his hand), for observation of vowel sounds. Such mirrors can be procured for 1d. each. Several well-known soap and scent firms send as many as 50 at a time if asked, for advertisement purposes. If there is any chance

of hands being washed before speech exercises, the child can also feel the vowel positions by putting the forefinger into the mouth, and if he is constantly having practice in listening to the teacher's sounds, his own and those of his companions, his hearing will help his sight and touch, and he will more quickly gain some knowledge of correct vowel sounds.

We must help the class to realize that differences in vowel sounds are produced by the positions taken up by the lips and the tongue. These speech organs make the breath into different shapes, as it comes into the mouth from the lungs. If, for instance, the children practise going from *ee* (weep) to *oo* (cool) they will find that the difference comes from the fact that *ee* is made with the lips "spread," and *oo* with the lips firmly rounded; that further, in *ee* the front of the tongue is raised toward the front of the hard palate, while in *oo* it is the back of the tongue which is raised toward the soft palate. The children will find out something else. If they are to make good clear vowels the tip of the tongue must in all their vowel practice be against some part of the lower teeth or teeth ridge. Now they have learned several valuable facts concerning the speech organs that shape the vowels, that some vowels are made with the front of the tongue, and that some have rounded while others have unrounded, or "spread," lips.

### Pure Vowels

It is well to let the child practise, if possible, by aid of the forefinger, and then by aid of the mirror, the three "back" vowels—

*oo* (cool), *aw* (call), *ah* (calm).

We can help him to realize that while in *oo* the back of the tongue should be raised as high as possible without making audible friction, and the tip is so low as to be dipped right down behind the bottom of the lower teeth ridge, in *aw* the back of his tongue has come down about two-thirds of the way, while the tip has come farther up against the teeth ridge to correspond. In *ah* he is dropping his tongue at the back as far as it will go down, though he must take care to keep the tip against the lower teeth, and not to pull back his tongue at the root.

The sound of *ah*, that is to say, is like a yawn. He has not, moreover, said these sounds properly because, using his forefinger, he could not round his lips. Now looking in the mirror he can see that *oo* has a tiny rounding just big enough to put his little finger into, the lips being set forward in a pout as soon as the little finger is taken out. The *aw* has a longer shape from top to bottom of the lips, with the corners drawn firmly forward, so that he can almost get three fingers in vertically, and the *ah* is just easily rounded, in such a way that two fingers can go in vertically.

Now let him try the sound made by the raising of the centre of the tongue about two-thirds of the way toward the top, with just a slight rounding of the lips. The sound which we must write is *er*, because we are not here using Phonetic symbols. This is the sound in "birth" and "worth" and "pearl" and "furlong." Now he can go back to *ee*, the first sound which he practised, and he will realize that, wherever the body of the tongue may have been, the tip has been always against the lower teeth or teeth ridge.

Before he goes on a further voyage of discovery, he should have some exercises on these sounds which are here set down. He should repeat each sound several times, and then sustain it to a count of 5, then use it in a series of words where it occurs, then help in forming a phrase or sentence containing several words with the particular sound he is practising. He must hold the tongue and lip position perfectly steady during the sound, because that is the difference between the pure vowel and the diphthong: namely, in the former, the speech organs keep the same position during the making of the sound; while in the diphthong the tongue starts in one position and moves toward another. It is this failure to keep the speech organs steady, involving a tendency to diphthongize so many of what ought to be pure vowels, that is so serious a matter in the speech of our school children. The exercise on vowels is as follows—

oo — oo — oo — oo — oo  
then

oo — — — — —  
(prolonged while counting 5)

then with consonants in front,  
 thus  
 coo — coo — coo — coo — coo  
 then  
 cool, gloomy, pool,

then a sentence to be made up by the class using these words—

"Come to the cool and gloomy pool."

This must be an exercise also in sustained breathing. The class should breathe in quietly and amply, as they have been taught, before beginning the sentence. Breath should be taken through the nose, but with the lips so easily parted that it merely seems as if the breathers were thinking quietly. Then the breath should be spaced out to reach to the end of the phrase with some left over, because one of the first things we have to learn when we practise speaking is to have enough breath to sound the last word full and clear with all its vowels and consonants, in the very front of the mouth at the edge of the lips. Our words should give us the feeling that they are dancing *outside* our lips, when we make them.

Similar exercises should be given with the other vowel sounds, and the children should be encouraged to give their suggestions for the words to be used and the sentences to be made from them.

It will be found advisable to teach at each lesson a vowel and consonant or a vowel and two consonants, and then to join both in the exercises.

The pure vowels—

oo (look) ö (lock) ü (luck) å (lack)  
 è (let) ì (lick)

have been often called short sounds, just as the preceding ones which we have been studying have been called "long." As a matter of fact, we can lengthen the so-called "short" sounds until we make them the same in duration as the long, so in essence they are not shorter than the others such as ee and oo. They sound so to us because they occur in positions in our words where their sound is not sustained. The short

mark ü is placed above each to make the difference clear between oo (cool) and oo (look), etc., but we should help the children to hold the sounds just sufficiently to get the practice in keeping the speech organs steady while the stream of breath is passing through—

oo (look, full, broom).

If it is possible for the children to feel with the forefinger just what is happening with the back of the tongue, they will realize that in sounding oo they have brought the tongue a very little way down from oo (cool), that the sound is made a little more forward than the oo sound, while the lips are relaxed slightly from the very close pout we used for oo.

The next sound—

ö (lock, spot, plod)

is easier to feel than to see. It should be practised about midway between aw and ah, with the lips slightly relaxed from the aw rounded position, but not as relaxed as ah. Such a phrase as—

"A hot spot in the grass plot"

gives good practice in the sound.

ü (luck).

If we first drop the back of the tongue as far as possible for that yawning ah and then raise it a little, we shall get ö (lock); if we raise it just about that distance and then send it forward just a little, we will get ü. It is really easier to go from ü to ah, because then we more readily feel with the finger the drop downward and backward of the tongue. The lips in ü are considerably more rounded than in ah, and it is that rounding we must see to.

å (lack, hat-stand).

This sound and the two which follow it in the list are easier to practise because, being made as they are with the front of the tongue, we can see them so much better. In å the tip of the tongue is, as usual, kept against the inner edge of the lower teeth, only now it is held there so high

that if we look in the mirror we shall see that the front edges bulge forward slightly over the lower teeth. We can best realize the position of *æ* if we think of it as we would of a cachou or a threepenny bit placed on the extreme tip of the tongue. Here is an amusing phrase for the practice of *æ*—

"A glad batch of lads catching crabs."

*æ* (let, red, tent).

If we look in the mirror we see that the tongue is slightly raised from the position of *æ* and the jaw moves upward. It is a good exercise to lay the first joint of the forefinger on the extreme front of the tongue, first practise the *æ* position, then feel the tongue rise under the forefinger and push it slightly forward when *ɛ* is said, and realize the little hump so made.

*ɛ* (lick, still, wind, pitch).

This sound is better first practised from the *ee* downward, rather than from the *ɛ* upward. If we test it with the forefinger we shall find that the tongue moves very slightly down and back from the *ee* position. If we go from *æ* to *ɛ* and then to *I*, and finally to *ee*, we shall find the front of the tongue raising itself by slight degrees at each point until at *ee* it is as high as it can go without making friction.

The pupils should practise lowering *ɛ* from *ee*, and then raising it from *ɛ*, to feel the slight backward movement each time. Sentence for practice—

"Pick a slim twig on the windy hill."

These sounds made with the front of the tongue are unrounded, but when we say this we do not mean that the lips are to be flattened back. Their corners should never be drawn back beyond the position which they have when the mouth is at rest.

### Diphthongs

*Ay* (make), *i* (mite), *o* (mote), *oi* (coil), *ow* (cowl).

*Ay* (*ɛ*-*I*). In making this diphthong the tongue

glides from *ɛ* (let) to *I* (lick), but as the general tendency with our children is to fail to raise the tongue high enough for the second element, it is wise to teach them to send the tongue smartly up from *ɛ* to the *ee* position. Let them practise the word "mate" as if it were *mɛ-ɛt*, though it is not advisable ever to write this on the board in case of harming the spelling sense.

Words: maintain, waylay, brain-wave.

Practise—

"The shape of the sails as they waved in the bay!"

*I* (*aɪ*). We have used this printed *a* for the starting point of the diphthong *I*, because it is not an English sound. If the children make the sound of *æ* (lack) and then with the forefinger press the front of the tongue just behind the tip, as far down as they can, they will get the sound *a* which the French use in *gras*—that is practically what we want. Let them go from that quickly and neatly to *ɪ*, and then practise doing this in the word *mall* (mite).

Words: night-lights, sky-signs.

Practise—

"While the bright sun is shining in the skies."

*O* (*o-oo*). The starting point of this diphthong is about midway between *oo* (cool) and *aw* (call), that is to say, that the back of the tongue drops straight downward very slightly from *oo*. The tongue then moves slightly forward and upward toward *oo* (look), for the second element.

The children will be greatly helped by looking carefully at the lip position. The lips for the first element are rounded in such a way as to give just enough room to insert the thumb. They should hold this position steady for a second, lift out the thumb, and, as they do so, push the lips quickly forward and narrow the rounding to make *oo*. In this way practise *mo-oo* (mote).

Words: stone-cold, broken, grope.

Practise—

"Broken stones for the old road by the moat."

*Oi (aw-i).* The starting position is from *aw* (call), and the position toward which the tongue moves is *i* (lick); though it is better here as in the other diphthongs containing *i* for the second element to aim at *ee* rather than *i*, and so get a more vigorous movement. In this way practise *caw-eel* (coil).

Words: Voice, coin, spoil.

Practise—

"The noisy voice of the spoiled boy."

*Ow (ah-oo).* The first element here is the *ah* sound in father, and the second the *oo* (look), but as our children tend to use the front of the tongue for the first element we must get them to practise pushing down the back of the tongue and getting that yawning sound of *ah* for the first element, and then going smartly up to *oo* so that they are moving from lowest-back to highest-back position.

Practise *cah-oo* (cow!), and never allow *ee-oo* or *ca-oo*.

Words: round, mouth, howl.

Practise—

"Round about the house they prowled."

Teachers will notice the injunction in connection with every diphthong to the effect that the children must always move the tongue quickly and neatly to the second element. If they do this they will avoid the drawling which is such a prevalent form of ugly speech.

### 3. Consonants

Our pupils will be interested to discover for themselves the difference between vowels and consonants. If we ask them to say *ah* (father) then final *p* (lip), or final *f* (stuff), they will soon realize, with a little help from the teacher, that the breath flows, without obstruction, in the vowel, but that it is more or less obstructed in the consonants—more, that is to say, in *p* and less in *f*. In *p* the breath is stopped altogether for a fraction of time by the closing of the lips, and then suddenly released, when it comes out in an explosion—hence the name *Plosive* which we give to *p* and *b*, *t* and *d*, *k* and *g*.

In *f* the breath is not entirely held back as

the lips hold back *p*, but the upper teeth and lower lip are so near to each other that the breath has difficulty in getting through, so it rubs through making friction as it passes—hence the name "Fricative" which we give to *f* and *v*, *s* and *z*, *sh* and *zh*, *th* and *dh* (voiced), *r* and *h*.

There are some sounds where the breath is held back, sometimes by the lips, and sometimes by the meeting of other speech organs of which we shall talk later, and yet these sounds do not pop out with an explosion when we release the speech organs from each other. They make a lovely resonant sound because, though we close the mouth-chamber, the sound goes singing on through the nose. Such sounds, then, as *m*, *n*, and *ng* we call "Nasals," and they are among the most musical in the language.

*L*, however, is the most beautiful of all our consonants, because there is hardly any stoppage of the sound. If the children make it carefully, forefinger ready for discovery and mirror in hand, they will find that they are just lifting the tip of the tongue to the top of the upper teeth ridge, holding it there while the sound is made, and that the sides of the tongue are quite free. Because the air comes freely over the sides of the tongue we call this lovely sound a "Lateral."

*W* and *y* (in initial positions) we call the "semi-vowels." In *w* the lips are rounded and pushed forward and the tongue takes the position *oo* (cool). In *y* the front of the tongue is raised to the hard palate, and then is quickly brought down to make the following vowel.

The older classes will enjoy learning the names set down here, together with the reasons why we use them, but with the younger children it will be enough to ask which are the "stops" (the sounds where the breath is stopped altogether), and which are the "run-on" sounds (the sounds where the breath "runs on," sometimes with difficulty and sometimes without).

They will soon find that the "stops" are—

*p, b. t, d. k, g.*

and that the "run-on" sounds comprise the rest except *w* and *y*, which they can call "half-vowels" because they are like vowels but made more tightly.

Now every one must find out why the teacher writes these sounds in pairs on the board—

*p, b. t, d. k, g.*

and

*f, v. s, z. sh, zh. th, th (voiced).*

*Ch* and *j* represent *tsh* and *dzh*, and should be practised as such.

The word "voiced" after the second *th* will probably help the older ones to tell us. The teacher asks how it is that these pairs are almost exactly alike in sound, and yet there is a difference. What is it? "Feel the throat while you say each pair and tell me." . . . "Yes!" she says, "the first of each pair is made with breath only, and the second is made with voice in it."

Now here are some sounds that are not in pairs. They are—

*r, h.*

*m, n, ng.*

*l, w, y.*

The children will find most interesting things—that though in England we give a "rub" to the *r*, it sometimes has voice (as in *red roses*), and sometimes has not (as in *trice* and *try*), that *m*, *n*, *ng*, and *l* all have voice, and so, of course, have *w* and *y*.

The most interesting part of all, however, is to come. We pick up our mirrors and begin to find out what the different speech organs are which hold back the breath in our consonants. We know that in *p* and *b* it is the lips, being firmly pressed together, which make the stoppage, and, looking into the mirror, feeling with the forefinger, and, last but not least, thinking about what is happening inside our mouths, we shall soon have answers to the effect that *t* and *d* are made by the tip of the tongue being lifted to the upper teeth ridge, while the sides are lifted to within the sides of upper teeth, and that *k* and *g* are made by the contact of the back of the tongue with the soft palate, the tip being kept firmly against the inner edge of the lower teeth. *F* and *v* they have examined—*s* and *z* have the blade of the tongue set firmly toward the upper teeth ridge, the sides of the tongue lifted and held against the

upper teeth, the breath coming over a tiny passage in the middle of the tongue. *Sh* and *zh* are very similar, but the lips are rounded and the narrowing of the breath passage is made farther back by raising the front of the tongue toward the hard palate. *Th* and *th* (voiced) are made by putting the tongue very slightly forward between the teeth and holding it in that position while blowing breath through. If the children practise *m*, *n*, and *ng*, holding the nose, or imitating a bad cold in the head, they will find that *m* is just *b* with the sound sent through the nose instead of the mouth, that *n* is simply a nasalized *d*, and *ng* a nasalized *g*, the mouth chamber being in every case closed at some point while the sound is sent through the nose.

Final plosives are, as a rule, very feebly said, and they need hard practice. They must be heard if we are to make our words intelligible, but they must not be overdone in such a way as to give the effect of a vowel sound added, thus—"peepuh" for "peep," "churchuh" for "church." A good exercise is that of testing the explosion of breath against the forefinger, held about 2 inches from the lips. Speak in this way, four times each—

*rip* — *rib*

*lit* — *lid*

*lack* — *lag*.

In the case of "rip," "lit," and "lack" there will be a definite puff of breath felt upon the forefinger, while in "rib," "lid," and "lag" there will be little more than a sensation unless we bring the forefinger close up to the lips. Then, indeed, we shall find a little but distinct puff, for there is no such thing as a fully voiced plosive in our language—they all finish with a tiny breath.

Follow such practice with an exercise such as—

*pape, peep, pipe, pope, poop.*

*babe, beeb, bibe, bobe, boob.*

and so on.

Follow this up with—

*ape, eep, ipe, ope, oop.*

*abe, eeb, ibe, obe, oob.*

*ate, ect, ite, ote, oot.*

Then invite the class to put in the initial position any consonants they may choose with which to make words, thus—

tape, weep, tripe, mope, loop.

It is much more amusing, and more useful also for speed with accuracy, if they practise these exercises with a rhythm, thus—

pape, peep, pipe.

pape, peep, pipe.

pape, peep, pipe, pope, poop.

The exercises should be crisply and smartly spoken, and given perfect rhythm. All plosives must be spoken with firm contact and neat, quick release.

The teacher can devise all kinds of variations upon this exercise, and with the older children, where there is no danger of harming the spelling, she can give practice in nonsense words, using the "short" instead of the "long" vowels with the consonants, thus—

smasts, smests, smists, smots, smusts.

thwacks, thwecks, thwicks, thwocks, thwucks.

The class enjoy immensely making up the most difficult combinations on these lines, and will show great ingenuity.

With the Fricatives, one of the main difficulties lies in the feebleness with which the voiced sounds are given. An excellent exercise, advised by Miss Ida Ward in her *Phonetics of English* (Hesler & Co.) is to go from *f* to *v*, from *s* to *z*, from *sh* to *zh*, and from *th* to *th* (voiced), giving breathed sound and voiced sound alternately on the same stream of breath. With the younger children it may be better to give a breath to each, and to frame the exercise thus—

*f, f, f, f, f.*

*f, v ; f, v ; f, v.*

*v, v, v, v, v.*

*v, f ; v, f ; v, f.*

*f — — — f.*

In the first and third lines every one must use a little puff of breath before each *f* and *v*, and in the last line every one must take one long breath counting 5, but the two lines in between these can be varied as suggested.

We can follow the plosive practice with the

"lipping exercise,"<sup>1</sup> and the fricatives by exercises such as—

Run wife for your life!

Run wives for your lives!

Leaves on the graves of the Braves.

Lists of the hosts at their posts.

Breaths from the heaths.

Fricatives are excellent sounds to practise if we wish to induce vigorous and sustained breath force. The holding of them on and the powerful quick push of them in the foregoing exercises are very valuable.

*L* is a beautiful sound very often marred in the speaking because the tip of the tongue is dropped, and the contact fails to be made. This is owing to the fact that the body of the tongue has been dragged back. Hence we hear in *l* final or *l* before a consonant something like "hiuh" for hill, and "mi-uhk" for milk. Separating the elements of the word thus—hi-*l*, and mi-l-k—will do much to remedy this, after the children have felt and seen the tongue position of *l*—they must realize that *l* means "tip of tongue against top of upper teeth ridge." Exercises for initial and then final *l* should be given—

Lucy Lester lost her lovely locket.

A shelf of blue delf for myself.

Gold in the old mould.

Bluebells in dells, and rills on the hills.

In the last three sentences the *l* sound should be held on for a fraction of time until it is definitely and correctly placed. The teacher can make from the first sentence a "Peter Piper" type of exercise, and the older children will greatly enjoy helping. There should be the same number of syllables as in Lucy Lester, and it should be spoken thus—

Lucy Lester lost her lovely locket,

Her lovely locket Lucy Lester lost.

If Lucy Lester lost her lovely locket,

Where's the lovely locket Lucy Lester lost?

Besides using the sound of *l* in the above, the other consonants can be brought into practice, thus—

Rory Rumpus rode a raw-boned racer, etc.

<sup>1</sup> *Speech Training in the Schools*, by Marjorie Gullan (Evans Bros.).

*R* is made by the turning up of the tongue tip to touch the very front of the hard palate. It is a good thing for the children to practise trilling the *r* even though in English speech of to-day the trill has fallen into disuse.

A good exercise on trilling is to give several short trills, and then a long one, thus—

*r, r, r, r, r.*  
*r—r* (to 4 counts)  
*r—r* (to 5 counts)

#### 4. Resonance

With *m* and *n* and *ng* we come to our Nasal Resonance Exercises.

Owing to bad habits of breathing, catarrh, and adenoid trouble, the nasal cavities may have been very little used for resonance by our pupils.

We must, therefore, get the children to hum *m*, then *n*, then *ng*, bringing the sound strongly down the nostrils and filling the nasal cavities with sound. In order to do this, teach them to make a bridge of the first two fingers of each hand by joining the tips together, and placing them lightly under the nostrils. They must be taught in their humming exercise to drive the breath strongly down the nostrils, so that the hot stream is felt upon the fingers.

Follow with exercises such as—

minne, minne, min

(4 or 5 times repeated with a fresh breath to each phrase, and sung upon different notes).

Follow with—

man, men, min, mon, mun.  
 nam, nem, nim, nom, num.  
 mang, meng, ming, mong, mung.  
 nang, neng, ning, nong, nung.

The younger children should take only three of the syllables in any line at a breath. They may develop the capacity, as they go on, to sound the five syllables in one breath, but it is better to work for fewer syllables and more sonority. Go on from these to words containing all the nasals, thus—

meaning, mining, morning, mooning.

Then to exercises containing many nasal sounds—

The jingling and the tinkling }  
 The rhyming and the chiming } of the bells  
 The moaning and the groaning }  
 or

The gong was ringing, clanging, and swinging,  
 and the women and the men were singing.

All these Nasal Resonance exercises should be sung or chanted on a variety of notes to give range of tone as well as resonance. The nasals in each case should be held on for a fraction of time to get full resonance from them, and later on spoken, but with the same holding on of all the nasal sounds. The children must be allowed to take breath very frequently, as the breath must be sent a long way if it is to travel from the lungs to the front of the nostrils. Also we must see to it that the neck and throat and jaw muscles are all perfectly loose and easy. It must be remembered that the negro gets his delightful humming done very often with a straw in his mouth and the whole of the face muscles relaxed and lazy.

#### Oral Resonance

The resonators in the neck and mouth are the back wall of the pharynx, the hard palate, the inner sides of the cheeks, and the bony framework of the teeth.

We can get very little power from these resonators in the mouth chamber if the soft palate with its pendant uvula is allowed to droop toward the back of the tongue, partially blocking the entrance into the mouth chamber while oral sounds are being made. There is another cause for blockage of this kind. The tip of the tongue in careless speech is often so retracted that the body of the tongue is drawn back and humped up in the mouth, blocking the passage which should be clear for sound. Not only do we partially block the entrance into the mouth, but we also neglect in this way the use of one of the best resonators we possess—the back wall of the pharynx. We must give our pupils plenty of exercises by means of which they shall learn to raise and lower the soft palate vigorously, and at the same time control the tongue.

Let the children take a light breath through the nose, with the lips parted, then breathe out through the mouth shaping a big *ah* silently and lightly, keeping the tongue as flat as possible in the mouth, with the tip of the tongue against the inner edge of the lower teeth. Mirrors must be used for this exercise, because each must see for himself, as he silently breathes *ah*, the uvula rise up high above the back of the tongue, with the arches clearly seen on either side of it. If we think of a yawn while we are breathing out this *ah* we shall get the result we want. Be careful when practising not to push out or push up the chin, as if this is done the throat muscles will tend to stiffen.

Follow with an exercise for alternately lowering and raising the soft palate, seeing to it that each child watches for the rising of the soft palate at *ah*, thus—

ng-ah, ng-ah, ng-ah (many times repeated)

then—

ming-ah, meng-ah, mung-ah.

Now take breath lightly through nose, hold it, counting a silent 3, and drop the mouth wide open, trying to insert the first two knuckles into the mouth, keeping the tip of the tongue against the lower teeth, and thinking a yawn. Then speak a phrase such as—

Father's class,  
Tall stalks,  
Wake baby!  
Old roads,  
Shining lights,

using the wedge of the knuckles before each word.

This exercise induces vigorous jaw and soft-palate movement. After a little, ask the class to make the movement without the knuckle wedge, but thinking that the wedge is in. Use the remaining long vowels and diphthongs for other phrases of the same kind, then follow with longer phrases.

## 5. General Hints

*Exercises for Mobility of Lips.* 1. Spread lips sideways (smiling position) as far as possible,

then quickly move them to closely rounded shape as in *oo*; do this five times and then repeat the exercise itself five times.

2. Push lips forward and draw them in quickly. Do this five times, and then repeat the exercise five times.

3. Go from *ah* to *aw* and from *aw* to *oo*, and then proceed backward, beginning with *oo*, rounding more or less according to the sounds. Do each set five times, and repeat each exercise five times.

*Exercises for Muscles of Tongue.* 1. Point and spread the tongue alternately. Do this five times; repeat the exercise five times.

2. Send tongue as far forward as possible, then draw it quickly back into mouth. Practise as in No. 1.

3. Raise right side and then left side of the tongue alternately as high as possible in mouth. Practise as in Nos. 1 and 2.

*Exercises for Nasal Twang and Adenoids.* Use all exercises already given under Oral Resonance for vigorous use of soft palate.

*Weak or Lisped s and z, Weak sh or zh.*  
1. Speak sentences in which *s*, *sh*, and *z* predominate with teeth clenched, strongly pushing the sounds so as to make them as intelligible as if teeth were open.

2. Practise *ts*, *ts*, *ts*, *ts*, *ts*. Five times repeated.

*tsh*, *tsh*, *tsh*, *tsh*, *tsh*. Five times repeated.

Practise *t* before initial *s*, thus—

"tscarlet tsilk" / scarlet silk.

Practise *ts* prolonging *s* a great deal.

Then practise *ts* prolonging *s*, and only thinking *t* while making its contact in the mouth. The result is a very firm *s*.

*Weak or Non-existent or Misplaced R.* We must here induce the pupil to turn up the tongue tip and "rub" it against the teeth ridge. Miss Ida Ward suggests putting the knuckle of the forefinger under the front of the tongue and, while turning it upward, attempting to sound *z* —the resulting sound is practically the voiced fricative *r*.

*The Sound H.* The children need to realize that when we breathe a vowel instead of giving

it voice, and then increase the breath force tremendously, we get *h*. If, added to this, they hold a mirror in front of the mouth and see the breath cover it, they will realize the breath force of *h*.

*T lost out in Words like Water, Bottle, etc.* The children can pronounce *t* in initial positions and also in the single syllable *the*, therefore practise the syllables *ter* and *the* and then separate the syllables of the words in question, singing the

syllables and prolonging the distance between thus—

*wa* —— *ter*.

*bo* —— *the*,

*Musical Tone.* The children should constantly hum their nasals and nasal sentences, lightly sing their vowels and vowel sentences, and firmly "lip" their consonant sentences if we are to hear from them musical tone produced well forward, right at the edge of the lips.

#### TABLE OF VOWELS

*Pure Vowels : "Long"*

*oo* (cool), *aw* (call), *ah* (calm), *er* (curl), *ee* (weep).

*Pure Vowels : "Short"*

*ōō* (look), *ō* (lock), *ü* (luck), *ă* (lack), *ĕ* (let), *ĭ* (lit).

*Diphthongs*

*ay* (make), *i* (mite), *o* (mote), *oi* (coil), *ow* (cow).

#### TABLE OF CONSONANTS

*Plosives* : *p, b; t, d; k, g.*

*Fricatives* : *f, v; s, z; sh, zh; th, þ (voiced); r, h.*

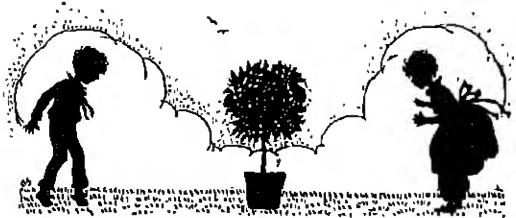
*Nasals* : *m, n, ng.*

*Lateral* : *l.*

*Semi-vowels* : *w, y.*

FIG. 5

*Vowels and Consonants Tabulated*



## THE STUDY OF LITERATURE

*"It is our imagination that cleanses the scales from our eyes and awakens our senses to the real things that surround us. . . . Where there is no imagination, there is cruelty, selfishness, death. . . . To treat a child without imagination is to treat it without love."*—From the Introduction to *An Anthology of Modern Poetry*, by ROBERT LYND (Methuen).

### *Introduction*

THE study of literature cannot and should not be divorced from the study of English in all its aspects. When we speak of "literature" we probably mean the study of prose, of poetry, and of drama and it is under these headings that it is most convenient to work. But the child's response to the writings of others must of necessity be bound up with his own attempts at speech and writing; his use of words in poetry and dramatic work must be related to his own everyday use of words. Literature uses words, the common means of communication of us all, and it is useless to overlook the fact that the modern child lives in a world where words are thrown at him from all sides, from the radio set, from the cheap press, from the hoardings. In English, as in all other subjects, it is a sound educational principle to work from the child's environment, to let him feel that he is in familiar surroundings, breathing a familiar air. Too often we divorce our teaching from reality and we try to persuade the child to enter a world that is to him unreal and artificial. This is particularly true of English literature. We want the child to become acquainted with all that is true, noble, and good in our literature; we want him to develop a critical sense; we burn with a zeal to lift him on to a higher plane of thought and living. This is all very admirable, but too often we find literature being taught by breathless, ecstatic teachers who are trying to force young children of ten or eleven to "appreciate" poems that may have a message and a beauty for the adult, but convey nothing but boredom and bewilderment to the child. Let us temper our

idealism, then, and be content to work very slowly, very gradually, often basing our work on the child's own interests but never losing sight of the fact that literature is one of the keys to a new world of imagination and beauty.

### *Poetry*

**RHYTHM.** It is not always easy to distinguish between prose and poetry, but one distinguishing feature of poetry is that it has a more obvious rhythm than prose. This rhythmical quality of poetry is one we make use of in our teaching from the earliest stages. There is, even in the youngest children, an instinctive love of rhythm and every Infant teacher develops this in her musical games, by her use of percussion bands, and in fact whenever bodily movement is used or whenever the traditional rhymes are sung or said. It is not lost sight of in the Junior School; for in the lower classes, the work is continued on the same lines as in the Infant classes. Later, in mime and dramatization, it is developed by more definite teaching. For example, in teaching a class of ten-year-olds to mime a ballad, one would lay stress on synchronizing the natural rhythm of the poem with the bodily movement which illustrates the action.

Rhythm, then, is important throughout the life of a child as a means of interpretation and expression, and no teacher who understands its importance would deny to the child the chances offered by poetry for enjoyment in these directions.

### *Enjoying the Poetry Lesson*

Every student in training should have impressed upon him or her this fact---

POETRY IS FOR ENJOYMENT.

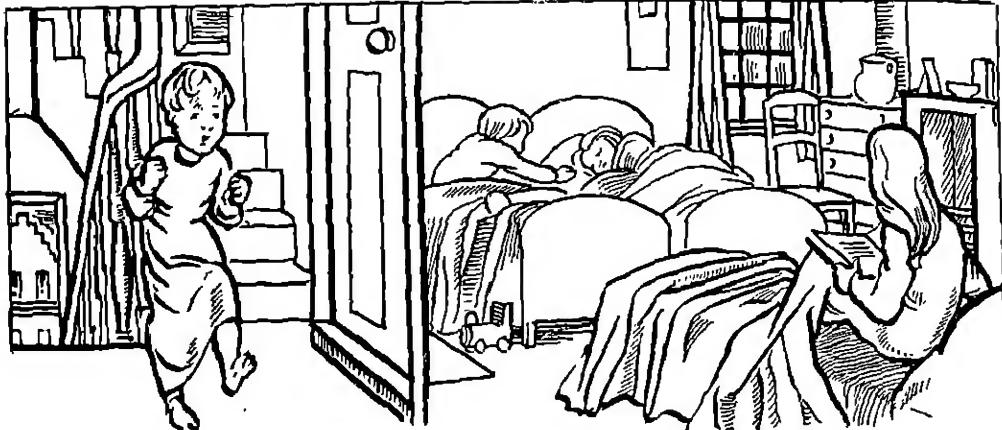


FIG. 6

Wee Willie Winkie: a simple narrative Lullaby

Too often one still sees the poetry lesson used for the study of language, with disastrous results; too often one meets people, old and young, who dislike and distrust poetry because their "poetry lessons" in school were dull, laborious exercises in dissection, or because they were forced to "learn by heart" poems which meant nothing to them. Great harm has been done by unimaginative teachers who should never have been allowed to "teach" poetry. The well-known saying that "English cannot be taught; it can only be caught" is essentially true of poetry. It follows, then, that a teacher who essays to deal with poetry with children should have a real sense of beauty in words, a true appreciation of form, rhythm, and atmosphere, and a knowledge of the needs, limitations, and possibilities of the children before him. During the time he is in front of the class he is an interpreter rather than a teacher; his job is to deal with the poems in such a way that the children are attracted, stimulated, awakened. We ought to bear in mind that it is in the teacher's power to give to children a love for poetry that will strengthen and enrich their lives for ever. It is also within his power to destroy the natural response of a child to beauty in words and to make him suspicious of his own reactions to poetry.

### *The Love of Poetry*

We have touched on one of the essential

qualities of the teacher who takes poetry. He should love poetry, for only if this love and enthusiasm is passed on to the children will his teaching be real and effective. Can we, when we are adult, learn to enjoy poetry? This is an important question, for there are some teachers who must take English lessons, including poetry, and yet find themselves out of sympathy with what they read, unable to find pleasure in it, unable to overcome the feeling that most poetry is meaningless and might well give way to prose, which says things in a straightforward and understandable way. The poet Mr. C. Day Lewis has written an excellent book for young people, *Poetry for You*, which might well be read by all those who do not like or cannot see the need for poetry. Another modern writer, Mr. L. A. G. Strong, says, "The man or woman who is completely ignorant of poetry misses one of the greatest sources of strength and happiness to be found in the world." Surely then, it is worth while making some effort to enable us to find and grasp this power.

But reading a book about poetry cannot be a substitute for reading poetry itself. Take a narrative poem such as "Reynard the Fox" or "Right Royal" by Masefield, "The Highway-men" by Alfred Noyes, or parts of "Hiawatha." There are many excellent narrative poems with a strong beat or rhythm. Read the poem aloud, trying to sense the rhythm first of all. Do not

be satisfied with one reading. Take any part of the poem and read it again and again, listening to yourself, trying to feel the regular beat in the lines. If you like, do as we often let children do in class—bang the table in front of you as you read in order to emphasize the beat. Rhythm is the essential element in poetry. It must be felt like a live pulse in the lines you read. When you can feel the rhythm, you will have taken a big step on the road to liking and “understanding” poetry. You will begin to get the “feel” of it, for we cannot talk of “understanding” poetry as we understand mathematics or history. Understanding poetry means the understanding of emotion and intellect: head and heart together. Now look at a lyric poem. Read the familiar poem by one of our greatest modern poets, Mr. Walter de la Mare, which begins—

#### THE SCRIBE

*What lovely things  
Thy hand hath made:  
The smooth-plumed bird  
In its emerald shade,  
The seed of grass,  
The speck of stone  
Which the wayfaring ant  
Stirs, and hastens on.*

It seems easy enough to write down in prose what the poet wants to say: “God has made so many lovely and wonderful things that Time itself would not be long enough to number them.” Compare that with the poem. Try again to write out more fully what the writer is saying. However many times you try you will be defeated. What is said by a true poet cannot be said in any other way and it could not have been said by anyone else. Poetry is evocative; it stimulates imagination, it arouses emotions, it gives life to thought. So we return to the start; to appreciate all that poetry is and can do, we must give the poet every chance to speak to us. This means effort on our part—and not only effort but surrender: surrender to the poet’s power to rouse, to stir, to teach. The effort and the surrender will not be in vain. Our lives will be immeasurably richer and our

teaching will be given a power and authority we have not previously known.

#### *The Importance of Reading Aloud*

There are some lovers of poetry who have still to realize to the full their possibilities as teachers of poetry. It is of vital importance that children should hear poetry read well, and this is an art that all teachers of English should strive to master. The training of teachers often includes nowadays some practice in reading aloud, but there is vital need for refresher courses and for continual practice in this difficult art. It is the first reading of a poem by the teacher which is all-important. The impression made on the children’s minds by the reading should draw them towards the poem; too often it sets them against it, or (which is equally harmful) leaves them indifferent. This is not the place to discuss in detail the question of reading aloud, but a warning should be given against the over-dramatic rendering of poems. This can be avoided by allowing the poem to speak for itself. Study it carefully before it is read aloud. Try to gauge the emotional pitch or tone of the poem, to feel its mood and its rhythm. The essential thing is, of course, sincerity.

Some help will come from listening to good reading of poetry. Sometimes there are good readers on the wireless, but we should, I think, be critical of the reading we hear, even if the reader is eminent in his own sphere. On the other hand, to listen to a great artist reading is an experience which cannot help but illuminate for us the whole poem. Some time ago, Sir Ralph Richardson read over the air the “*Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyám*.” He gave life to the poem, a life that would re-create the poem in the minds and hearts of many listeners.

Children have a natural instinct for the right in these matters.

#### *After the Reading*

When the poem has been read, what is the next step? One could put forward a good case for leaving it to make its own effect, remembering that poetry is for enjoyment. That wise man

and stimulating writer, the late Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, has some words in his well-known book *The Art of Reading*, which every teacher ought to study. He quotes from Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner"—

*The moving moon went up the sky,  
And nowhere did abide:  
Softly she was going up,  
And a star or two beside.*

And he says, "Do you really want to chat about that? Cannot you trust it?"

He continues—

*The stars were dim, and thick the night,  
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed  
white;  
From the sails the dew did drip—  
Till climb above the eastern bay  
The horned moon, with one bright star  
Within the nether lip.*

Must you tell them that for the moon to hold a star anywhere within her circumference is an astronomical impossibility? Very well, then, tell it. But tell it afterwards, and put it away quietly. For the quality of poetry is not strained. Let the rain soak; then use your hoe, and gently; and still trust Nature; by which, I again repeat to you, all spirit attracts all spirit as inevitably as all matter attracts all matter."

"Cannot you trust it?" That is where I would take my stand. I would trust it—and I would trust the children. If there is to be any follow-up on the poem, let it arise from the desire of the children themselves. As long as they have real questions to ask, let them be satisfied, but do not attempt to insist on discussion, whether it be of word, phrase, meaning or form unless you feel that the class is with you and is anxious to go on. That warning having been given, it is only fair to say that there will generally be a desire to talk about the poem. Let the teacher guide the discussion carefully, avoiding questions which have a direct personal appeal, such as, "Now, John, which verse (or line) did you like best?" John may not have sorted it out in his own mind yet, and if he has, he may resent the attempt to make him reveal his private thoughts on the

poem. When a poem such as De la Mare's "Arabia" is read, no comment would be asked for, and no useful purpose would be served by discussing the poem with children below the age of twelve. This is one of the poems we read for enjoyment only—the enjoyment of the sheer beauty of the words and the enjoyment, mixed with awe, of the mystery and strangeness of the atmosphere. But suppose we take this lively poem by Andrew Young.

#### A WINDY DAY

*This wind brings all dead things to life,  
Branches that lash the air like whips  
And dead leaves rolling in a hurry,  
Or peering in a rabbit's bury  
Or trying to push down a tree;  
Gates that fly open in the wind  
And close again behind,  
And fields that are a flowing sea  
And make the cattle look like ships;  
Straws glistening and stiff  
Lying on air as on a shelf  
And pond that leaps to leave itself;  
And feathers too that rise and float,  
Each feather changed into a bird,  
And line-hung sheets that crack and strain;  
Even the sun-greened coat,  
That through so many winds has served,  
The scarecrow struggles to put on again.*



Here are pictures that children will recognize and be eager to talk about, and a good deal of most useful work on the use of words, informal but stimulating, can be accomplished. Children will realize that the poet is giving us new eyes. We see the pond as he sees it—and have we

ever thought of the scarecrow before as being like a man putting on his coat? Here are vivid and lively pictures in words; children will soon understand what poetry is if we read and discuss poems such as this one. So, some poems are for reading only, some are for reading and discussion—but no poem should be used in the Primary School as a basis for written exercises in the use of words or for grammatical form.

### *The Close of the Lesson*

In the Junior School, a good way to end a poetry period is to turn to some other form of expression.

A narrative poem or ballad lends itself to miming or acting and although most of the ballads are more suitable for the Secondary School, there are some which children will enjoy and which they will soon be able to turn into little plays. The form and rhythm of the ballad have an instant appeal to children, and having heard it read, they will wish to translate the thrill they have felt into action.

A lyric poem can be illustrated. The poem quoted, "A Windy Day," for example, contains several pictures that can be readily recognized and translated into crayon or paint.

By these means a child is helped to interpret what he has heard and he is more able to absorb what he has felt to be exciting or beautiful.

### *Learning Poetry*

The vexed question of whether children should be made to learn poetry and if so what method is to be used, may very well be solved if the ideas we have been discussing are kept in mind. If the poetry lesson has always meant enjoyment they will want to learn certain poems, or parts of poems, that appeal to them.

It is worthwhile saying here that whenever there is a lack of interest, apathy, or active dislike of poetry, the teacher must take the blame. Somewhere, somehow, in his treatment of the poetry or of the children, he has failed. It may be, of course, that the poem is not suitable for the age of the children. Perhaps the reading has been poor, or it may be that the atmosphere of the class at that particular

moment was not suitable for that particular poem—or for poetry at all. Whatever the reason, it is worthwhile considering carefully the reasons for failure. When the interest has been aroused, as will normally happen, the poetry must be learnt by the children before it can become, as we hope it will, a real part of themselves. Let them make personal anthologies. Even the youngest children in the Junior School will enjoy writing out lines they love, illustrating them, perhaps decorating their books. Older children can certainly make and decorate books of poetry and they will treasure for a long time these personal collections. If they write poems of their own, as they should be encouraged to do, these might well be included in the anthology, or a separate book of these might be made. Let the books be of a good size, giving scope for the child's own ideas of writing, arrangement, illustration, and decoration. Do not say that the paper cannot be spared for such "frills," or that there is no time in school for this type of activity. Art, poetry, handwork are all manifestations of the creative spirit, and it may be that during these periods you will be helping to release that spirit in the child. Nothing in the school curriculum can be more important.

### *Poems Suitable for Junior School Children*

Something should be said of the poems suitable for children below the age of twelve, though it is impossible to lay down any rules as to the poetry children will like. All we can say is that on the whole children of this age group prefer poems which are simple and direct in thought and musical in quality. It is better to avoid poems specially written for children by adults who have no realization of a child's thought processes or of his dislike of artificial sentiment. Some good lyrics can be included in the singing lesson. Children instinctively enjoy the best, and while a class of ten-year-olds will enjoy learning a song such as "Hark! Hark! the lark," they will quite rightly regard it as a waste of time if they are asked to commit to memory some ridiculous jingle set to a tune which again has been specially written for them.

Narrative poems are usually very suitable for children of Junior School age, though poems of nature and lyric poems which capture or help to explain a mood, a thought, within the child's experience should also be included in those read. It should not be necessary to stress that at this stage all poems should have a strongly-marked rhythm and that the sounds of the words should appeal as well as the sense.

### *Choral Speech*

Some of the verse should be suitable for choral speech. Many a child who has come to hate poetry because he had to "come out in front" to say his piece would have enjoyed taking his share in the choral speaking of the same poem. Again we come upon the all-important idea that there should be no drudgery. The aim should be to delight and charm—not to improve or inform.

### *Prose: The Need to Read Widely*

In the Infant School the child is led to literature by way of the teacher's story-telling, helped by his own growing ability to read and talk about a simple tale. We can do no better than continue on these lines in the first year or two of the Primary School. The teacher will do most of the reading, and even in the upper classes it is important that the teacher should read quite regularly. Not only should he set an example of how to read, but it should be realized that his reading enables the child to absorb and enjoy the story without bothering about the mechanical difficulties. Time should be given for the children to read to themselves and this means that in the school or class library there should be a wide selection of books suitable to their ages and interests. The Primary School child should read as widely and freely as possible so that his taste may be formed on a broad basis. What is important is that he should read—that he should form the habit of reading, so that books are for him familiar sources of pleasure, consolation, and knowledge. We hear too often of children in Secondary Modern Schools who cannot read, who show no interest in books. The Primary School cannot

avoid some blame for this state of affairs. Give the child access to a variety of books dealing with things that interest him; make sure the books are within his reading compass, well illustrated and attractive to handle in every way. Soon he will be eager to use such books, eager to show that he can read and that he can find out from books what he wants to know. The teachers are really the only people who know the difficulties, limitations, and possibilities of their pupils, and it would be helpful if more of them were to try their hands at writing books for children. Too many practising teachers are ready to accept school books written by people outside the profession, who, however successful they may be as authors, cannot be aware of the needs of those children who become and remain "backward" because of their inability to cope with the books they use. The problem at the Secondary Modern School stage is being tackled, but much research is needed in reading ability of Primary School children. Do we, as teachers, realize how powerful is the key of reading to unlock for the child the doors which lead to peace, beauty, and knowledge?

### *Forming "Taste" in Reading*

What type of reading should be offered to the child under the age of twelve? Just as in poetry there can be no rules laid down as to what children will like or dislike, so in prose we must not restrict the choice or range. Remember, we want them to *read* and if they read what seems to us to be rubbish, or if on the other hand we find them dipping into books of a more advanced kind, it would, I suggest, be unwise to interfere. If we consider the common problem of the reading of "comics," we must agree first of all that most children pass through a phase when this type of reading matter is the staple literary diet. There is nothing particularly harmful in this, provided other and better books are put within the child's reach. The danger is that this easy and childish reading is continued into adolescence and even into manhood. How are we to avoid this? And how are we to make the literature lesson as exciting to the child as machinery is to the mechanic or music to the

musician? The answer lies in the enthusiasm of the teacher, who can, by his own obvious enjoyment, in some measure transmit his own feelings to the class. Without this enthusiasm, which cannot be simulated, no real success in the literature period is possible.

There are, however, ways in which the teacher can also give practical help. He can link up literature with the child's own writing. Writing is a craft, and the craftsmanship of literature can be better understood, even by young children, if they themselves have attempted authorship. To insist on correctness in grammar, punctuation, or spelling is to stifle at birth whatever there may be in the child of the creative approach to writing. We want him to be able to express himself in words that have power to stimulate, to excite. Let him write, then, and the more his power in writing grows, the more obvious it will be to him that order, exactness, and clarity are necessary. He will come to realize that what may be called the "good manners" of writing are not without use.

### *The Child's Environment*

Earlier on it was mentioned that the child's environment should not be overlooked when the English syllabus was under consideration. In his daily life such things as the radio and the cinema play an increasingly important part. However much we may deplore the way in which these influences are used by the public, however much we may criticize the standards they set, we must remember that they are part of the environment of us all; they are influencing many of us day by day. How are we, as teachers, to make use of and to adapt these influences? Each teacher will find his own solution to this problem, depending on the situation of his school and on the background of the children he teaches. The writing of radio stories and plays for imaginary radio performances, discussions of and visits to films that the teacher has selected, the comparison of a film with the book from which it has been taken—these are some of the more obvious ways in which even young children can be brought to apply certain tests to the familiar entertainment of every

day. Literature is a living force: it is not something bound in books, a mystery to be enjoyed and practised by the few. It must, if the child is to feel its power, enter into his life as he lives it day by day. Literature deals with emotion expressed in words; so do the theatre, the radio, the film, and the teacher of literature neglects at his peril these *modern* forces. The problem is great; to state it is not to solve it, but merely to ensure that it is not overlooked.

### *Drama and Teaching*

"The value of dramatic work has long been recognized." This is a sentence from the 1931 Report on the Primary School. But even though as long ago as 1931 the value of such work had been recognized, it is doubtful if the dramatic instinct in children has yet been fully developed in our schools. It enters naturally into the everyday life of the young child. Much of his life is lived in a world of make-believe, and, without in any way encouraging an "escapist" attitude, we lose a heaven-sent opportunity of furthering our educational aims if we neglect this desire for acting. To go, for example, into a classroom which has been transformed into a shop, to watch the small shopkeeper conducting his transactions in a serious and absorbed way while his young lady customer, transformed into a life-like imitation of her mother, buys the household goods with shrewd discrimination—this is to realize the possibilities of the dramatic method in arithmetic. This is true education. To the children this is real life, and they learn with much less effort because their imaginations are captured and their real selves are released. In nearly every aspect of school life we may allow this desire for make-believe to find an outlet, with results that will often surprise the experienced teacher. Drama is usually associated with the English period, but the dramatic method in activity work, in History, Geography, Religious Knowledge, and even, as we have seen, in Arithmetic, can give life and reality to our teaching.

It has already been mentioned that an excellent method of following up a narrative poem is to dramatize it—or certain parts of it.

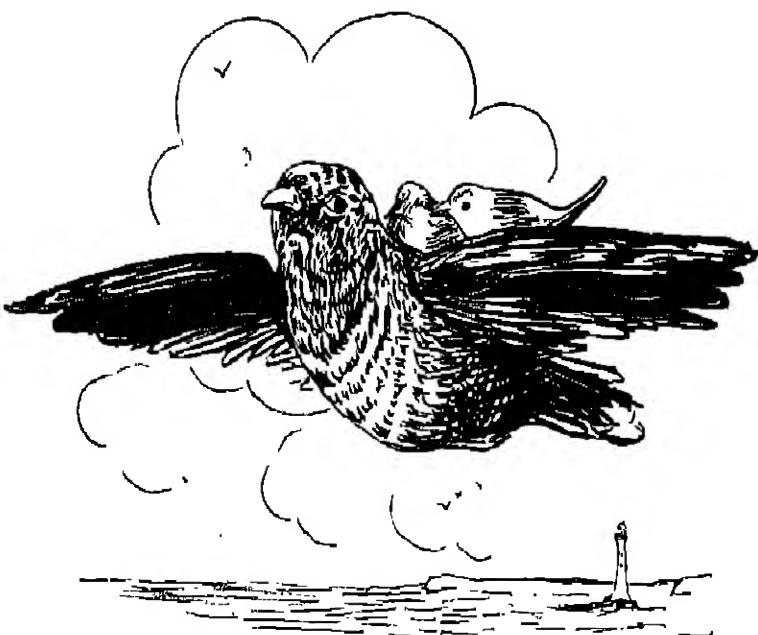
This can be done either by mime or by the use of words with actions. Ballads lend themselves readily to acting, and children become very eager to take part in this type of work.

Dramatic work is discussed more thoroughly in a separate section, and methods of bringing life and reality into such work are dealt with in the "Activity Methods in Teaching Literature."

### *Conclusion*

One of the aims of education is surely to enrich life, to put the child into touch with sources of power, inspiration, and consolation.

The teacher of literature by the very nature of his work can do this, quickening the child's imagination and bringing life to the classroom—life more abundantly.



## ACTIVITY METHODS IN TEACHING LITERATURE

*"We get the matter in proper perspective when we remember that poets are, literally, makers or makers, to use the old Scots equivalent. Not only in poetry, then, but in literature generally, in mathematics, science, geography, history, and all school activities, the pupil is to be a maker, a creator, a doer. Always he is to have the joy of discovery, of creative activity; he is to be satisfied with the travail of his own soul."*

*"We can all agree that, especially in the early stages, formal instruction ought to occupy a place subordinate to the child's own purposive activity."*—GROUNDWORK OF EDUCATIONAL THEORY (Ross).

THE above quotations give point to the idea with which most teachers in Junior Schools will be familiar—that activity methods should be increasingly used in the teaching of young children. We know that our teaching is wasteful and inefficient if we stick too closely to the method of "chalk and talk." Children are individuals; each one is at a different stage of development; each one needs individual attention. With large classes in the Junior School it is impossible for us to carry out freely the ideas and methods we know to be right, but we can at least break away from the system that condemned children to sit inactive for long periods in uncomfortable desks. What were these children doing? Sometimes they listened, more often their thoughts wandered and they dreamed of a release and a happiness not to be found in school. Sometimes they read or wrote and occasionally they were freed from their desks to "drill" or to play. But they knew that the shades of the prison-house—the classroom—would close about them again after a brief period of freedom. Those teachers of not-so-long-ago had failed to realize the fundamental fact that children learn best when they are themselves actively engaged in their own education. This idea is the foundation of what we now call "activity" methods, but what might be more reasonably called common-sense methods.

In her book, *Activity in the Primary School* (Basil Blackwell), Miss M. V. Daniels says: "These three words 'Experience,' 'Experiment' and 'Activity' express the character of Junior School work better than any others, and it is through these three channels that Junior children build up a lasting body of knowledge and develop powers of reasoning and an inquiring attitude of mind which they will never lose."

How can we introduce activity methods into Literature teaching? Several suggestions for giving interest and reality to the work will be given, but it is well to remember that whatever methods we use, it is the personality and the personal interests of the teacher which will be the greatest factors in bringing about that quickening of the imagination which we have agreed is to be one of the main ends of our teaching.

### *How to Deal with a Story for Older Juniors*

When a book is being taken with the whole class, is it sufficient to read and discuss the story? There are sure to be words, incidents, descriptions which are outside the experience of the child, and there is danger that much enjoyment and much value may be lost. Suppose we are taking the always-popular *Treasure Island* with a group of boys in the top class of the Junior School. If the children have copies they read part of the story themselves and part is read by the teacher. If the class is not supplied with copies then the teacher reads either the whole book or selected passages linked by his own narration. It is obvious that the boys will not want to leave the book when the reading is over. Opportunities for acting are many and there is little difficulty in getting the children to select scenes for dramatization. Much of the dialogue can be taken direct from the text and useful work in play-writing can be found in attempts to invent additional dialogue where it is needed.

But before dramatization takes place, it might be advisable to let the class illustrate any parts of the story that appeal to them. The teacher will be kept busy helping them to pursue

details of costume, reconstructing a scene, providing material for historical detail, and in general filling in the background to the story. The finished illustrations might be put together to form a frieze of the story, or they can be used for individual books the boys may make.

Some boys will be eager to make models and in this particular book there is a wealth of material. How much real enjoyment there would be and how greatly the value of the reading would be enhanced! If, for example, a boy has been one of a group which makes the good ship *Hispaniola*, if he helps to reconstruct the fight at the stockade, and if he has studied and discussed a large model of the whole island, there can be no doubt that *Treasure Island* will be to him, not only a book, but an experience.

A warning must be given against carrying on these activities for too long a period with one book. The teacher must be sensitive to the atmosphere of the class and it is his job to realize when the children are becoming bored. When this happens it is time to change over to another book or a fresh topic. Young children will work intensively at drawing, acting, model-making for short periods, but they are apt to become tired of an idea fairly quickly.

### *Making a Book*

An alternative follow-up to the reading might be the making of a book by the children themselves. Here is a suggested method—

1. The teacher shows to the class a large map of an imaginary island which he has made himself. Discussion follows on the purpose of the map, what features it should show, what certain symbols mean, and so on.

2. The children draw their own maps, being encouraged to invent names, to introduce individual features, and to make their maps as exciting and as well-produced as possible.

3. The map being finished, the story is now written. There should be absolute freedom for the child. No fear of retribution because of bad spelling, handwriting, or grammar should hold back the author from giving his best to the story. If the approach has been right there

will be a strong desire from every member of the class to produce a good result.

4. Illustration at appropriate places in the story should be encouraged, and here again there should be no insistence on a high technical standard.

5. The map, the text, and the pictures being finished, the final step is to bind the book, giving it a title and a suitable decorated cover.

The results in one group will vary enormously, but each child will feel that a real job has been done and there will be a sense of achievement and a pride in the work that will be of particular value to the rather more backward ones.

Give plenty of latitude with regard to time. One child may perhaps write a page or two and will quickly tire, while another will be prepared to spend several periods on the work. While the interest remains the work has value, but to carry on too long is to invite failure. On the other hand, however long or short the book may be it is wise to insist that it should be finished. There is no value in a task half done and we must beware in all this work of condoning a careless or slipshod attitude. Whether it be acting, craftsmanship, or anything else, we must make the children realize the need for a discipline which is imposed by the work itself. If it is worth doing, it is worth doing as well as possible. So we reach one of the main advantages of activity work in school—the gradual realization by the child of the need for self-discipline. He himself is responsible for the final success or failure of the task in hand; he cannot shelve the responsibility or blame any one else. This has nothing to do with the *excellence* of the final result: all we ask is that a child shall have put into his work the very best of which he is capable. We do not expect from every child a high level of technical excellence, for even in one age group standards vary very much. Summing up, we must look for two things—

1. The job must be finished.

2. The work must be the best of which that particular child is capable.

### *A Story for Younger Juniors*

In the lower classes the same activity methods may be used and the book that is being read

to the class may be the centre of much of the work. Let us imagine that *Peter Pan* is the book the class are interested in. For seven- to eight-year-olds the reading should be divided up, so that each section may be dramatized or "played at" before the next part is read. Acting will be the basis of the activities, but "dressing-up" and the making of properties will give scope for a good deal of ingenuity and inventiveness on the part of class and teacher. Boys could concentrate on the making of the Wendy House, while the girls were responsible for the furnishing, the curtains, etc. This would give a natural introduction for the girls to needlework. In practice, the house would be the centre of a great deal of happy activity. There is nothing new in this. Many Infant Schools have made Wendy Houses and employed the methods suggested here. What is important from the point of view of the Junior School teacher is that in the first year the same methods should be adapted for Junior children, though the activities are more co-ordinated, more controlled, and lead to a more definite result. The change from the freedom of the Infant School to the more ordered activity of the Junior School ought to be carried out with a minimum of disturbance in atmosphere and method. Abrupt and apparently meaningless alterations in the curriculum and the ordering of the day's work can result in unhappiness for the child, with the inevitable retardation which accompanies it. Carrying out such a project as we have discussed, based on a book being read to the class, will make the children feel at home. They will learn, without shock or distaste, that work can be fun; at the same time they are obtaining increased command of skills which are necessary for future knowledge.

If there seems to be a good deal of noise in the classroom there is no need to worry. Houses cannot be built in silence, and no real workman would remain seated in a desk all day! The activity should, of course, be ordered and purposeful and it will be if the teacher has planned and prepared the work with foresight and care. It might be helpful if we were to treat in a little more detail the method of dealing with a story in the first class of the Junior School. As an example we will take one

of the "Sam Pig" stories by Alison Uttley. This one, "Sam Pig and the Hurdy-Gurdy Man," is taken from Chapter III of the book *Sam Pig and Sally*.

First, read the story to the children and let them make any comments they like on it. Next go on to dramatization. The story might be split up as follows—

*Scene I.* Sam is sitting on a wall and drawing the things and people that pass along the road. Entrance of the Hurdy-Gurdy Man and conversation between them.

*Scene II.* Sam and the H.G. Man come to the Big House and go into the kitchen. Conversation with Cook.

*Scene III.* H.G. Man goes along the road playing the Hurdy Gurdy and Sam goes with him, collecting money from passers-by in a tin. Most of them turn away, but one or two put in money. Conversation between Farmer and Sam and the H.G. Man. Sam leaves his friend asleep and takes the Hurdy Gurdy.

*Scene IV.* Sam at home. Conversation between the Pigs and Brock the Badger. Brock puts new tunes in the Hurdy Gurdy.

*Scene V.* Sam returns to the barn and gives back the Hurdy Gurdy to the owner, who is surprised and delighted when he hears it play.

*Scene VI.* Man plays the Hurdy Gurdy while Sam and other children dance to the music.

*Notes.* The Hurdy Gurdy can be a portable gramophone. The actor could either pretend to turn the handle of the actual gramophone or the tune could be played out of sight while the actor used a specially made one. Do not attempt to imitate the Irish brogue of the Cook. In Scene III there is an opportunity to use several children as passers-by. The new tunes in Scene V would be indicated by a fresh record—very lively and gay.

This is a bare outline of what can be a very jolly little piece of dramatization. The teacher will see in the story obvious possibilities for activities. For example, in the first scene where Sam is writing down all the things and the

people that pass along the road, he is supposed to draw, as he could not write. The class could do as he does, identifying themselves with him and incidentally giving encouragement to the more backward writers. They could draw the cart, the "High-wheeled yellow gig" (some help from teacher here!), the "ancient motor-car," the farmer's cart, the beggar, and so on. In Scene VI the music and dancing will suggest further rhythmic work to some teachers.

Most stories for young children can be treated in this way. By carrying out such activities we are enlarging the child's mental and physical experiences, encouraging invention and adaptation, giving opportunities for handwork, art, good speech and—more important—bringing joy to our work.

### *The School or Class Play*

The ideas we have been discussing can be applied to most books taken with Junior School classes, and the teacher need never be at a loss for activities that will link up the English in his class with the rest of the work. For example, an excellent project can be centred round the production of a school or class play. Begin with the miming of simple action poems and ballads, either individually or in groups under a leader. Go on to the reading, writing, and acting of stories, and so to actual plays, some of which may be written by the children themselves. Their knowledge of and familiarity with wireless programmes can also be used and mock broadcasts of plays and of Children's Hour, variety programmes, dialogues, etc., will cause lively discussion and produce interesting results. In all this, speech training will find a natural, though not obtrusive, part and many opportunities for helping to improve written and spoken English will occur to the teacher.

In the field of practical work, the making of model stages with figures of plasticine or cardboard is not beyond the capacity of young children and there is much real training, as well as enjoyment, in the planning, decorating, and painting of the model stage and its scenery. With the older Juniors, it might be possible to include some very elementary work on lighting and there is certainly a chance to introduce

here measurement, simple area, costs, and so bring life to the arithmetic.

Should there be a theatre in the neighbourhood, a visit would show the children that the cinema is not the only form of entertainment possible; and even at Primary School level, some comparison of the two arts might be possible. Another visit "behind the scenes" to see how things work would round off an experience which might have valuable long-term results.

So we should come through miming, writing and acting plays, building model theatres and settings, and visiting theatres, to the actual production of a class or school play. Choosing or writing the play, selecting the cast, finding jobs for everyone, making properties, scenery, and costumes would lead up to the final production. Everyone would feel that something real and worth-while had been achieved and the child's sense of satisfaction would react favourably on his general attitude to school life.

In all this the child has been actively engaged in his own education.

### *Pageants and Tableaux*

Other ways of using the dramatic instinct are in the pageant, which combines literature and history, and the tableau. A keen young teacher was able to produce beautiful effects in a series of Nativity tableaux, with the enthusiastic co-operation of children and parents. The children quickly grasped the spirit of the activity and there was no need for constant insistence on the desirability of a reverent attitude. There was a natural dignity about their work, and the actors who formed the living pictures, the readers who linked together the various scenes with appropriate verses from the Bible, the members of the choir, and the youngsters behind the scenes all felt that they had been privileged to help in a moving and satisfying experience. The natural beauty of the groupings, the singing, the glory of the Bible words—all ensured that such a venture—whether we call it literature, Scripture, or drama—was well worth the time spent on preparation.

### *Puppetry in the Teaching of Literature*

An activity that has quite rightly found great favour in many schools is puppetry. Its advantages are many: it presents ideas and scenes with simplicity and directness; it is a craft that can be adapted for work with children of almost any age, from the Infant School to the Secondary School; materials are not difficult to obtain or to handle; the child who is shy in front of others can be heard and not seen; it can be of use in many subjects; and, finally, children accept it without question as an activity worth pursuing for its own sake.

Puppetry can be used in literature teaching in a natural and attractive way and many ideas will occur to the teacher. The acting of scenes from books is an obvious choice, but a warning should be given that not every book is suitable for adaptation for puppetry. Nothing would be gained, for example, by using puppetry when reading the book already mentioned, *Treasure Island*. Dramatization in this case could be better done by actual actors. It should be borne in mind that puppetry may often be the second best choice, for actual acting by the children has a value that puppetry cannot give. But, to take another example, what delightful little scenes could be made from one or two incidents taken from Dickens—Oliver Twist asking for more, or scenes from *Botheboys Hall*!

Characters which are suitable for puppets must be rather larger than life; there must be an idea either of caricature or of fantasy. Scenes from *Peter Pan* or *Alice in Wonderland*, could be used; *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and similar fairy tales lend themselves admirably to puppetry. But modern stories for children, in which the characters are very much like the people of everyday life or are a personification of the child's natural desire for action and adventure (for example, the "Biggles" Books)—such stories are not suitable.

It is wise to keep puppetry scenes short and bear in mind that the activity does not lend itself, any more than does dramatization with young children, to many words with little action.

There are various ways of making puppets. For Juniors, glove puppets are the most suitable, as they are easier to make and to handle.

### *Books and Libraries*

Whatever methods are introduced into our teaching, it must be constantly kept in mind that literature is contained in books, and it is vitally important that we should see that children in the Junior School learn to love and to use books, to realize that a book may be the doorway to delight and to knowledge. A child should know where to find the books he wants in his class or school library and he should know also that his local library can help him when the school perhaps cannot. With the problems of reading as a skill we are not here concerned, though it may be worth while to say that it is useless to expect a retarded child of nine or ten to make much progress if he is asked to carry on with an Infant Reader. There is need for the type of book in which the matter and illustrations are suited to the actual age of the child, though the words and language are adapted to the reading age.

### *Running the Library*

Class and school libraries should contain a wide range of books. There should be every type of story and the books should be arranged attractively. Too often the class library has consisted of one or two rows of tattered, dog-eared books, some with no backs, arranged without order or system on the shelves. Why not make it the responsibility of one or two children in turn to look after the library, to examine the books and to report to the teacher when repairs are needed? Simple repairs might be done in the handwork period, while the Secondary School would doubtless be willing to help when the repairs were too difficult. In any case, children should be taught at all stages to care for books and to take a pride in their library. This pride will come more readily if the children have been responsible for choosing the books themselves. Miss Daniels, in the book already mentioned, *Activity in the Primary School*, gives an account of how pupils in a

certain school carry out an activity of this kind—

Since the children are drawn from each class, the whole age range is represented and books suitable for each age are selected. The children are given complete freedom to look at the books on the shelves and stalls; they ask the shop assistants for any help, for example, the price of a book that appeals to them or whether a particular book is available, or where certain types of books are to be found. A few children may flit about from shelf to shelf without really examining the books, but in general the children select carefully, judging not only by the appearance but by the content as well. The teachers give guidance and help, drawing the children's attention to items like suitability of subject-matter, print, price, and so on. When a book has been chosen, the child takes it to the Head Master for approval. A few questions are asked to make sure that the child knows what kind of book he is selecting, and then the final decision is made. Sometimes a child will carry a book round with him and ask time after time that it should be added to the purchases, and the look of pleasure that comes over his face when at last consent is given indicates the real interest in books that the visit arouses. This practical approach to literature stimulates reading throughout the school, and the children are beginning to turn to books as their chief source of information and as an enjoyable hobby. Not the least exciting part of the expedition is the wrapping up of the books into two or three parcels, and there is considerable rivalry as to who shall carry them back to school. The visit is rounded off by a cup of tea at a café before the return journey.

It has been thought worth while italicizing part of the above in order to emphasize that here, as in other activities, the fact that the children are themselves doing the work has made all the difference between apathy and eager interest.

How different is this kind of approach from the days when the "library books" were given out, and, even if the child had little or no interest in the book he received, he was expected to read it through to the end before he could change it.

Books and the library period should stand for enjoyment and when children are allowed to select their own it must be obvious that the books mean more to them. Gradually certain tastes will be revealed, and it will be of great interest to the teacher to find out and to tabulate the books in order of popularity.

If a room can be spared to house the library, so much the better. A few tables and chairs, suitable pictures, an atmosphere of restfulness and quiet—these things all help to give the right attitude to books and reading, and the patient, sympathetic teacher who is never

academic or falsely "high-brow" about books will soon notice the increasing desire of the children for the reading period and the way in which that period is used with enjoyment and growing taste.

The system of classification should be simple. Some schools use coloured labels: yellow for animal stories, red for adventure, blue for school stories, and so on. Others use a simplified number or alphabetical system. Whatever method is used will help to train children to use the Juvenile section of their local library, which should be visited by parties from school at regular intervals. The Librarian could no doubt be persuaded to visit the school to give advice on the arrangement of books and to talk to the children about the library and about reading generally. There would thus be formed a friendly link between school and library that might last through the Secondary School period and continue after school was over.

There should be some definite plan for the uses of the library periods, and children should become familiar with the resources of a library. For Junior School pupils there might be three ways in which the library could be used—

1. For enjoyment, when books would be chosen and read without interruption or comment.
2. For reading and discussion. The teacher would invite suggestions as to books to be included, discuss books and authors and read extracts. The aim of this period would be to attempt to widen the children's ideas on reading generally.

3. For finding information. For example, if a pupil is to give a lecturette he should be shown how to find the books he needs and should be allowed free use of the library for preparing and writing up notes of his material. The room should often be used in project work and one of the advantages of this method is the habit of independent inquiry fostered in the young worker.

Properly used, the library periods can be of great value. Few more important tasks await the teacher to-day than that of trying to give such opportunities in school for the development of some powers of taste, discrimination, and judgment.

# THE APPROACH TO LITERATURE

## LYRIC POETRY

THE following poems will be found suitable for children who have just passed the transition stage. They should now have an instinctive feeling for rhythm.

### THE MOON

By E. L. FOLLEN

Although this poem is longer than Christina Rossetti's, it is in every way a younger poem, and should be used to encourage observation. It should precede Christina Rossetti's. The child's excitement, surprised admiration of the changed moon of which she catches sight unexpectedly, her wonder at the reflected light in her nursery are embodied in every line. The last verse is a child's thought, it rings true.

The teacher should do no more than convey the *emotion* of the child to her children. That is the great thing in this, as in all lyrics. Clear expressions of the different phases of the moon, the different shapes and degrees of light, and the twinkling star belong to a different category. These should be correlated with Nature study as objects of observation. Here they are meant to be associated with the *emotion* of the child.

### IS THE MOON TIRED?

By CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

This is a very beautiful little poem 8 lines long, in 2 verses. Read sympathetically and convey the *emotion* felt by the poet.

1. The poet is touched by the spectacle, the pale moon half hidden from our sight by her "misty veil."

2. The moon moves on her way even as the watcher speaks; sympathy, an emotional thought, is expressed in—

"She scales the sky from east to west,  
And takes no rest."

3. *Before* the coming of the night how pale the

moon is! Papery white. Before dawn, she fades away.

The poet manages to convey a restrained emotion on her part, and an awe-inspiring silence in the sky, where the moon moves so soundlessly. "She fades away!" and for a moment we are dumb and still. "Is she tired?"

If the poem is taken at just *the right time*, the teacher can add, "Shall we have a good look at her to-night and see what we think?"

### SILVER

By W. DE LA MARE

This is a beautiful study in silver. The moon walks the night, silently indeed, but with no suggestion of weariness. On the contrary, she is a Power. Slowly walking the sky, she transforms with her silver light dove-cote and thatch, tree tops and kennel into strange objects of wonder.

*Hints for Reading.* The mental attitude is that of being present at a miracle; the atmosphere is rare, strange, compelling quietude, awe, and wonder.

In spite of the accented opening syllable in most lines, the poem is written in stately rising dissyllabics. Take as your guide the slow and stately progress of the moon. "Silver" is a wonderful study in rhythm.

The children should shut their eyes and "dream" the picture.

(This poem is quoted in full in the section "Additional Poems.")

### IN MARCH

WORDSWORTH

It should be a comfort to the teacher to take a poem like Wordsworth's Spring Song with a class. There is no temptation to use a dictionary. Expression is straightforward and the diction

simple; but more than this, sound as the observation is, there is something that transcends observation, something that cannot be placed or defined—something qualitative.

- (a) *The green fields sleep in the sun.*
- (b) *Like an army defeated  
The snow hath retreated.*
- (c) *There's life in the fountains.*
- (d) *The rain is over and gone.*

It is spring; the world wakes and rejoices. "There's life in the fountains." Everything's alive! I am alive and so are you.

Convey the emotion of joy in living to your class. Let them *feel the emotion* that animates these lines from the first to the last.

Let them feel "dancey"—and there is no surer way of doing this than to take the poem rhythmically, if it is worth it. This is. It begins—

*The cock is crowing,  
The stream is flowing,  
The small birds twitter,  
The lake doth glitter,  
The green fields sleep in the sun;*

Each verse consists of 10 lines; 4 lines are short with just 2 rising dissyllabics; these are followed by a line of 3 rising measures. Then come 4 more short lines and a last line of 3 rising dissyllabics. Do not change those 3 foot lines into 4 feet. *Keep the pace* up by not prolonging the silence unduly after "sun" and "one."

Monotony is avoided by the arrangement of the sounds in the rhyme scheme. It is an arrangement, not a haphazard medley. Bring out the rhyme sounds.

The unaccented syllable at the end of each short line makes it less short, by giving us more sound; we get all the bustle and life of spring. The long lines are memorable. The teacher should not be satisfied until the children catch the movement, until they beat the long line after short lines, until they feel the design, and repeat the words as they move.

Nothing more should be done with a poem like this. The children have felt it; that is the

thing. Let them memorize the lines that please them. (This poem is printed in full in the section "Additional Poems.")

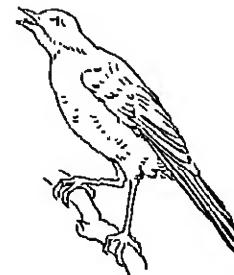
### 9-Year-Olds

#### THE RIVALS

What is the *prosaic* gist of this poem? At dawn, when the poet was singing a song about dew and wind, a bird upon a tree sang too; his song also was about dew and wind. The poet says he did not listen to the bird, because it was not singing to him; it sang prettily, but he himself was singing just as prettily.

*The difference between this and the poetic account.* How different the poetic record is! The poem is essentially a song; it sings itself, and you sing too; it dances along and carries you off with it; it "sets you in tune" for *listening* to melodies heard and unheard that ring through the world, and for getting on with the business of art—creating, building up. Bird songs are wonderful, and poets are wonderful, but we, too, have songs to sing.

*I heard a bird at dawn  
Singing sweetly on a tree,  
That the dew was on the lawn  
And the wind was on the lea;  
But I didn't listen to him,  
For he didn't sing to me.*



This is only the first verse; but it is enough to show that the power of suggestiveness is a more subtle thing here than in the prose account. The thing, as expressed here, means much more than it seemed to mean. The poem tells us as distinctly as if we had been present at the scene.

that the poet was "all ear" for the bird's song. He even looked up. He knew what every note meant in that song of dew and wind, and delighted in its sweetness. He felt his kinship with the bird. Were they not singing the same song? But he looked at the bird and the bird looked at the world. Here is the unusual touch, *the mark of individuality*.

*The Music.* Let us examine the nature of the music in order to make sure that we are not losing half the melody.

A delightful effect is felt if we realize that lines such as "Singing sweetly on a tree," "But I didn't listen to him," "I was singing all the time," "Just as prettily as he" are lines of three feet, not four. Taken thus, the reader gets the right movement of the verse, captures its sprightliness, deepens the happy effect instead of nullifying it.

Initial long syllables like "Sing," "That," "And," "But," "I," in "I was singing all the time," and "Just" increase the musical effect if rightly interpreted. They must not be slithered over; on the contrary, their notes must be heard; a certain duration, longer than the negligible unaccented syllable that follows them, must be carefully given them, *but they do not bear beats*. They should be interpreted as true

anapaests:  $\text{oo } \underline{\text{—}}$ , "Are thou | sa a rose."

*Pace and Tone.* The pace is set by such trisyllabics as: "That the dew," "And the wind," "As he sang"; i.e. quicker than the rising disyllabic,  $\text{—}$ . The tone is light, delicate; not frivolous, but with a suggestion of the poet's own delight at hearing the bird; he is moved by its song.

"About the dew" is a foot of four syllables substituted with success in the general movement. The whole beautiful sound design is perceptible if we listen for the effects indicated above, and convey them as we read. Repetition and reiteration with slight changes mark the rhythmical purpose.

*I was singing all the time  
Just as prettily as he,  
About the dew upon the lawn*

### THE BEE AND THE FLOWER

*The bee buzz'd up in the heat,  
"I am faint for your honey, my sweet."  
The flower said, "Take it, my dear,  
For now is the spring of the year,  
So come, come!"  
"Hum!"*

*And the bee buzz'd down from the heat.*

*And the bee buzz'd up in the cold ;  
When the flower was withered and old.  
"Have you still any honey, my dear ?"  
She said, "It's the fall of the year,  
But come, come!"  
"Hum!"*

*And the bee buzz'd off in the cold.*

TENNYSON.



In this poem we find a delicate subject, beautifully expressed, but not "too beautiful to think about and talk about." What are the elements that the poet has unified into this beautiful whole?

1. The prosaic gist, the hard fact that the eye sees, the thing we may all see though we lay no claim to imagination; a piece of information that we may enter in our notebooks in Nature study.

2. The happenings of spring! How different from those when winter is near! Out of this *contrast*, the imaginative mind evolves a *story*. In spring and warmth, the flower has much to give and all that the bee seeks; in chilly autumn the flower has nothing that the bee prizes. Thence comes a change of attitude, the bee buzzes off, the withered flower stays.

The poet's mind dwells on bee and flower; they become to him such vivid entities that he seems to hear them speak; and what he half hears and half creates, he gives us in dialogue

bearing the impress of bee and flower nature; true, in short, to natural fact. There is a great difference between the prosaic gist and the poetic record. The poet has not stopped short at the bee's revolutions outside the flower. He has a vision of a hot day, imagines the different effect on bee and flower—the bee faint, the flower, rich and sweet with honey that restores; he hears the bee's wooing, the flower's welcome, ending with—

"So come, come!"

and the bee's triumphant, ecstatic, long-drawn out "Hum-m-m-m." in acceptance of the invitation.

The poet's vision reaches out beyond this happy spring time for bee and flower. Autumn is here, the flower is withered; when the bee buzzes up seeking warmth and refreshment, the withered flower confesses that 'tis the fall of the year, but still invites the bee; "Come. Come!" "The fall of the year," however, reminds the bee that the flower's day is really over; she hasn't the honey he seeks; why linger? So he buzzes off in the cold.



The little story is told effectively; both description and dialogue give the impress of the action. Besides these objective elements we may perceive the poet's own regret for the passing of things, the passing of love, and youth, and even of the old order which "Giveth place to new." Verse like this needs only to be read *understandingly*; it speaks for itself.

### 10-Year-Olds

When the children reach this stage they can do more with a poem, as is shown in the detailed account of a lesson on "The Forsaken Merman." The class are helped to feel the beauty of conception and of rhythm, by discussion and by dramatic treatment.

### Treatment of "The Forsaken Merman"

One of the reasons why this poem charms children so irresistibly, is that it is addressed primarily to them by a poet who understood. The sorrowing father makes an appeal to which only his children, more helpless indeed than he, but sharers of his sorrow and his hope, could be expected to respond; he calls upon them to play just the part that children play instinctively, a natural role. It is true that the merman knows the children to be a likely means of winning the beloved Margaret back to her "Red gold throne in the heart of the sea"; and he is sure that "children's voices should be dear"; but these are thoughts rightly attributed to the adult mind. The child's sorrow, the quest that a child may share, the magical home in the depths of the sea where strange toys for children abound, and the comfort that a child may give—these make their appeal.

The poem is understood best, and helps the children, perhaps more surely than any other poem in the language, to make true progress when it is approached in several ways.

1. By the teacher's reading aloud.
2. By three or four methods which all come really under the dramatic heading, but differ from each other in the demand they make upon the child, and the immediate purpose they serve.

### Hints for Reading

The teacher reads the poem through in order that the children may receive the impression that only the finished work of art can give. She *must choose her tone very carefully*; for the first section is, of course, not the beginning of the story. The happy life under the sea, the mother's

return to the little white-wall'd town, the merman's search, are all over; Margaret is found, but she keeps her eyes sealed to the holy book, she is deaf to the cries of the mer-children.

*Section I.* The mood to be conveyed in the first section is sorrowful resignation, with a slight change at—

*Now my brothers call from the bay.  
Now the great winds shoreward blow.*

on to "toss in the spray"—these lines describe a cause for haste, and should not be taken at too leisurely a pace. The singing quality of the last lines of the section must be "got over" to the class—

*Children dear, let us away,  
This way, this way.*

*Section II.* But "hope springs eternal . . .," and the merman begs the children to call their mother once more. So, turning back toward "the white-walled town and the little grey church on the windy shore," they—

*Call once yet . . .  
"Mother dear, we cannot stay!  
The wild white horses foam and fret."*

The "ret" of Margaret must be given its due prominence; it rhymes with "yet" and "fret," it is the important sound. The singing quality of these "Margaret" lines must be rendered so that the children, when they recite the lines, will no longer say: "Margrit, Margrit."

*Section III.* The merman can do no more; he knows that she will not come though they call all day. The emotion here is hopelessness, *despair*.

*Section IV.* Despair is still the note but lightened by *reminiscence* of the happy life under the sea. Was it yesterday?

*Section V.* Reminiscence merges into hope. ("Call yet once.")

*Section VI.* The merman feels their doom. ("Call no more.")

*Section VII.* A different note, joy but a quavering joy, a divided happiness. The human point of view is less simple than the sea-king's.

Margaret sits at her wheel—

*Singing most joyfully . . . O joy, O joy*  
but she remembers with—

*A sorrow-clouded eye  
And a heart sorrow laden.*

The voice is pitched higher for this section.

*Section VIII.* Although the merman hears the sigh from a sorrow-laden heart, he knows that the mortal has made her choice.

*Section IX.* But the kings of the sea will keep faith for ever,

*When clear falls the moonlight . . .  
Up the creeks we will hie . . .  
We will gaze from the sand hills,  
At the white sleeping town;  
At the church on the hill-side—  
And then come back down,  
Singing: There dwells a loved one . . .*

This perfect song, the vow to be faithful for ever, is to be rendered *softly and rhythmically*, with the decision which marked beat sounds can convey.

The teacher's appreciative reading, as described, may be followed by a form of miming. The children feel for appropriate actions and gestures as they proceed, falling back on sheer rhythm when the lines suggest no other movement to them.

Children and teacher say the lines, the teacher *listening intently* and correcting intonation and rhythm, while the children attempt different gestures. This is a *collective rendering* of the whole poem with excellent opportunities for individual children with ideas. The teacher will get all the suggestions for graceful and appropriate actions she needs for the two or three awkward ones of her little flock, by watching the class, when they are *feeling their way*. They are happy in "endless imitation" of actions, endless repetitions of the lines they are interpreting; so at the very worst the sceptical can take comfort from the fact that the children are becoming familiar with one of the masterpieces of the language. At the best, mental growth accompanies each effort at interpretation; the imagination is developed and improved as mind and body are occupied with beautiful imagery.

not in one line, but in line after line of perfect rhythmical movement; finally, under the happy influence of the poem for a sufficiently long period, the children are transported into its atmosphere, first impressions are deepened, and they know, by intimate experience, the joy of "a thing of beauty."

### Dramatic Work

The children now consider the story, the real beginning, the middle, and the end, with a view to arranging scenes for acting. This makes an excellent lesson if the teacher is absolutely familiar with the order of events and *can place all answers given*. "No! that does not happen now, it happens immediately *after* the point I want!" "No, we had that at the beginning." There should be no vagueness about this kind of lesson; answers must be on the spot; if an action suggested does belong to the series of events, it is good work to help the child, when the time comes, to place it. "You see, Mary, where your point comes? You are much too soon," and so on. It is a tremendous leap forward when the children find the *first thing that happened* in "The Forsaken Merman." It is by such moments as these that the way is prepared for advanced considerations, in the Senior School, of "The artist's management of his material." The children become *familiar* with the thing here; they will discuss it at a more mature age.

The children weigh events, consider which fall into groups, which remote statement can be linked with others, which so-called scenes can really be acted. There is a connection between the clear thinking of this process and that of paragraph structure.

### The Scenes: Thinking Out the Story

#### Scene I. Under the Sea.

The material for the first scene is found in the Section V of the poem, that containing the lines—

*Once she sat with you and me*  
*On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea*  
*And the youngest sat on her knee. . . .*

*Down swung the sound of a far-off bell.*  
*She sighed, she look'd up through the clear green sea;*  
*She said, "I must go . . .*  
*'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me!"*  
*The merman said—*  
*"Go up, dear heart, through the waves;*  
*Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea caves."*  
*She smiled, she went up . . .*

Where is this *taking place*? The description is given in Section IV.

*We heard the sweet bells over the bay*  
*In the caverns where we lay,*  
*Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,*  
*Where the winds are all asleep;*  
*Where the spent lights quiver and gleam . . .*

deep down under the surf and the swell of the sea.

#### Scene II. Still Under the Sea.

How much time passes between Scenes I and II? We do not know, for the merman cannot measure time. He only knows that it is very long.

The material for the scene is found in Section VI—that containing the line "The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."

The merman—

*"Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say.*  
*Come,"*

And they rose through the surf, climbed up the beach "to the white-wall'd town," thence to the churchyard, where they gazed through the leaded panes at the folk within. The people within the little grey church *are not seen*, except by those who peep through the panes.

The merman, looking in, calls—

*"Margaret, hist! come quick we are here!*  
*Dear heart" (I said) "we are long alone . . ."*

But Margaret will not look at them. "Shut stands the door."

There is an alternative. The scene might be imagined as opening with the church, the priest, and the folk at their prayers, Margaret visible

to the audience, but with her eyes *not sealed* to the holy book. Then, a long way off, the speech of the merman; then the mer-people appear climbing up the beach, and go through the churchyard. We, too, see Margaret sitting by the pillar; and as the merman calls, Margaret's eyes, wandering before, perhaps remembering, become "seal'd to the holy book."

Where is all this taking place? It is rather a question of giving the dullest children an opportunity to speak, for even they wax eloquent. *They know.*

*Scene III. On Land, not Far from the Church.*

This scene follows immediately on the second. The material is found in Sections I and II, the opening lines of the poem, down to where the mer-children call—

*Mother dear, we cannot stay!  
The wild white horses foam and fret.  
Margaret! Margaret!*

and one line of Section III—

*Come, dear children, come away down.*

And as they make their reluctant way down the beach, Margaret escapes and enters a little house, "in the humming town."

*Scene IV.*

About to plunge, the merman and the children hear a voice that they know. They creep back toward the little house "in the humming town," and see Margaret singing at her wheel.

They hear her joyful song.

Margaret within, the sea people without. This material comes from Section VII. To it, we add Section III, l. 23. It is Margaret's song that makes the merman say—

*Call no more,  
She will not come though you call all day.  
Come away, come away.*

As they go they sing the beautiful song with which the poem ends.

*The Setting*

The settings for the different scenes may provide an invaluable stimulus: Where were we then? Where are we now? Was it night or

day, storm or calm? By this time, even if the children did not read very well at the beginning, they are eager to have the text of this poem and will make good use of it. When they finally decide that such and such a setting could not be reproduced and *should not be attempted* they have grown tremendously, for they have been perusing the text, weighing the text, listening to the text in order to come to a decision. One of the most effectual ways of approach to



FIG. 7

*The Forsaken Merman*

(M. Arnold)

But, children, at midnight,  
When soft the winds blow,  
When clear falls the moonlight,  
When spring-tides are low;  
When sweet airs come seaward,  
From heaths starred with broom,  
And high rocks throw mildly  
On the blanched sands a gleam;  
Up the still, glistening beaches,  
Up the creeks we will lie,  
Over banks of bright sea-weed  
The ebb-tide leaves dry.  
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,  
At the white, sleeping town;  
At the church on the hillside—  
And then come back down.

literature is this enthusiastic *discussion of the setting* with the idea of acting the scene in the near future. Children forget the performance and plunge into talk about scenery and properties, linger on text; and the reasons they give for doing without, and *imagining* the landscape, or accepting any kind of makeshift, are always instructive to the teacher.

### *Selection of Cast*

Now who are the people who play parts in this story? We must choose a merman. First, what sort of person is the merman? What kind of thing has he to say? Who will *do* that kind of part *best*? The children listen to two or three candidates, select the one who gives a rendering nearest to the standard just established, and reject inartistic renderings; this training proves invaluable when the children act the scenes.

### *Making a Frieze*

The children *think out* a series of pictures, scenes for a frieze of "The Forsaken Merman." In the art lesson they carry out suggestions suitable for them with their limited attainments.

### *The Final Reading*

The children sit quietly and *listen* to the poem as planned and perfected by the poet. This is an important step. The reading should continue without interruption as at the beginning—when the narrative was first introduced to the children.

### *Report of a Lesson on "The Forsaken Merman"*

1. *Circumstances.* The teacher had read the poem, the children had mimed it through; they had also illustrated a scene in previous lessons.

2. *Introduction.* She told the children that she was going to read the poem in sections to-day, not straight through as she did two days ago. She wanted them particularly to notice at *what point* the narrative began—the first thing we were told. There was an interesting digression about the advantage the poet

enjoyed over the painter. "The poet can tell us more things," "he can make us hear as well as see," "he gives us beautiful words"; "he can make things move, they don't just stand still"; "the poet gives us beautiful rhythm"—these were some of the answers readily given by the class. The teacher then made her point. "Yes, and there is this! The poet can begin at the end if he likes! Think of that, for he is able to tell us *first* just what he *wishes us to hear first!*"

3. "Listen to what Matthew Arnold tells us first." She then read—

*Come, dear children, let us away;  
Down and away below!  
Now my brothers call from the bay,  
Now the great winds shoreward blow,  
Now the salt tides seaward flow;  
Now the wild white horses play,  
Champ and chase and toss in the spray.  
Children dear, let us away!  
This way, this way.*

4. *Questions.* What does the poet make us see? Merman and mer-children, waves, wild white sea horses.

What does he make us hear? The voice of the merman.

How is it that we understand him? The merman's voice is like a human voice.

What other sounds *must* be heard by those standing by the sea looking at wild white horses, etc.? *Listen* while the verse is read again.

"We hear winds." "Yes," said the teacher, "the sough of the winds." Other children contributed: "the roar of the tides," "the splash of waves," "the hiss of spray."

5. *Children given an opportunity to do something.* "Now let us try to reproduce those sounds." The teacher divided the class: 3 or 4 were to hiss, 3 or 4 to make the splashing of the waves, half a dozen the roar of the tides, a few a low booming noise, and the rest different notes of the wind. The result was effective. The children practically knew the section after reproducing every detail of the storm.

6. The teacher now read Section II—

*Call her once before you go—  
Call once yet!  
In a voice that she will know;*

*"Margaret! Margaret!"  
Children's voices should be dear  
(Call once more) to a mother's ear;  
Children's voices, wild with pain—  
Surely she will come again!  
Call her once and come away;  
This way, this way!  
"Mother dear, we cannot stay!  
The wild white horses foam and fret."  
Margaret! Margaret!*

7. *Questions.* Who is speaking? What do we learn from his words?

(a) "That the mother is on land." "No, we don't know that yet," said the teacher. "That they have lost her."

(b) "That her name is Margaret."

(c) "That they have been calling her a long time." "How did the line about children's voices go?" asked the teacher. The next line is "Surely she will come again?" At the help given by the rhyme word the right answer came: "Children's voices, wild with pain." "And what do you think that means?" "They were screaming!" "Well, they were, I think, on the verge of tears." And so on.

8. *"Listen while I read Section III. It is very short."*

9. *"What do we learn from this?"* (Here followed questions.)

- (a) That the mother is on land.
- (b) That she is in a white-walled town.
- (c) There is a little grey church.
- (d) They have come in search of Margaret.
- (e) She does not answer when they call.

10. *Repetition and Visualization.* "Now I want you all to repeat the two lines about the white-walled town and the little grey church on the windy hill. They come several times in order to mark and paint the scene for you. Shut your eyes, and remember to follow the rhythm: you must show despair in your tones."

*One last look at the white wall'd town  
And the little grey church on the windy shore.*

The children repeat these lines until they have caught the rhythm. *They know the lines by heart.*

11. *Teaching the Children to Use their Books.* The teacher then made the class look in their poetry books for the description of life under the sea and Margaret's story.

"We have been looking at the white-walled town. (a) What does the poet talk about next? Describe what happened."

(i) They were lying in the sea caverns.

(ii) A far-off silver bell sounded.

(b) "What did the sea-people think of this bell? Did they like the sound?" "Yes, they called it 'music.'"

(c) What animals do the little mer-children see every day and perhaps play with?

(i) The sea-beasts in their pasture ground.

(ii) The sea-snakes that "coil and twine, dry their mail, and bask in the brine."

(iii) "Great whales (that) come sailing by . . ."

(d) What was Margaret doing when they heard the bell? Who can give me the two lines describing the bell? Look up! See if you can remember them.

By collective contributions they get the two lines and *will not forget* them. "Now what was Margaret doing? Read me the exact words from your books."

(e) "What did Margaret say? What do we learn about her from this?"

"She wasn't a real mermaiden; she was like us."

The teacher added quietly: "Yes, she had a soul as we have."

(f) "What do we learn about the Merman from what he says? Is he rough? Does he shout at Margaret?"

(g) "How long had Margaret been away before they set out to find her? Look at the last line of each of the sections before you. Read it aloud."

*Children dear, was it yesterday?*

He is so unhappy that he has lost count of time.

(h) "That is how we found them on land when the poem began. When the poem opens have they found Margaret?"

"I will read the next section and then I want you to tell me exactly what they *did* from the time they left the sea to the moment when they found her."

(The answers are in Section VI.)

Did they go right away when the merman said "Call no more!"?

Was it only what she did in church that we hear about? There was something about a

spindle. Yes, but look in your books *and find out*.

Is Margaret happy or sad? This was a trap question. Some said one, some said the other, one voice said "Both." Yes, she was in a joyful mood and in a sorrowing mood.

What made her glad? The class gave various details which the teacher summed up as "all the human things."

What made her sad? "She remembers her baby," "The little mermaiden with golden hair that she was combing," were two of the best answers.

"Memory and longing," said the teacher.

Where will the mer-people go when they leave the town? How does the sea look when you are at the bottom and look up? The part we see from the land is their ceiling.

*A ceiling of amber,  
A pavement of pearl.*

"Now repeat the words of their song with me."

*Here came a mortal,  
But faithless was she!  
And alone dwell for ever  
The kings of the sea.*

Now we know the very beginning of the story! "Here came . . ." What words tell us the real end? "Alone dwell for ever . . ."

So we may imagine them at midnight still climbing the beach in the light of the moon, up to the white-walled town, and going back sadly to the sea. Once there, they sing.

"Give me their song . . ."



FIG. 8  
"When clear falls the moonlight"

### "The Nightingale"

This poem of C. Rossetti's is introduced for the 10 + children in group C.

How many of the class have heard a nightingale? Where? When?

Suppose you wanted the nightingale to sing, what is the most beautiful way you can think of expressing your desire? If you wanted some one with a beautiful voice to sing . . .?

This is how one poet says that she longs to hear the Nightingale.

The teacher reads the whole poem, that the completed thing, the finished work of art, may make its appeal. As she reads she conveys the longing in the first stanza, the atmosphere of moonrise, when everything is silent, sweet, and pale.

She "gets over" to the class the note of excitement in the first two lines of the second stanza, when the poet prays the moon to hasten and mount the sky, so that the nightingale may wake. After the second line comes a striking change. The moon has wakened the nightingale, and it begins to sing. As soon as it begins, the poet cries—

*Let silence set the world in tune  
To hearken to that word-less tale  
Which warbles from the nightingale.*

While the enchanted poet listens, regardless of time, the skylark begins. The listener looks about her and sees that it is not yet dawn: the lark is too early. So she makes an appeal to the skylark; and the teacher tries to get the terms of that appeal over to the class.

*O herald skylark, stay thy flight  
One moment, for a nightingale  
Floods us with sorrow and delight,  
To-morrow thou shalt hoist the sail,  
Leave us to-night the nightingale.*

The teacher tells the children that she is going to read the poem again that they may enjoy its music and its form.

As the children have been trained, and are being trained, to recognize sound designs and enjoy their discoveries, they listen.

*Considerations for the Teacher Only*

The teacher must convey the design to her listeners. She must make them hear three verses of *five lines*, rather an unusual scheme. They cannot hear time-lines unless they hear also the *ends* of the lines, which should always have a certain prominence. Rhyme helps considerably here, and the class will certainly welcome the recurrence of a note, once sung.

The rhyme scheme goes thus: sing, gale, thing, pale, gale, or *a, b, a, b, b*.

"Nightingale" ends the second and fifth lines in all the verses, so that each stanza is linked to the others.

The measures go smoothly, with the relief of substitutions. The four rising dissyllabics in each line are made to express longing, pleading, and something approaching a rebuke. The first substitution is in the third line of the third verse.

"Floods us with sorrow and delight," where "floods" is an apparent monosyllabic foot. The second is in the last line.

A number of sonorous words, used as unaccented syllables, add much to the sound scheme of this little poem. Such words as "come," "rise," "lark" are every whit able to beat beats as we know. Used as they are, they steady the verse, and help to establish the atmosphere of thought and deep emotion.

*The sunrise wakes the lark to sing.  
The moonrise wakes the nightingale.  
Come darkness, moonrise, everything  
That is so silent, sweet, and pale,  
Come, so ye wake the nightingale.*

Besides the repetition of "nightingale," "wakes" comes three times, and will be found once more in the second stanza. "Come" occurs twice, but only in the first verse; "moon" is another link between I and II, etc. These repetitions make for simplicity.

Alliteration plays a part in the melody, e.g. "Make haste to mount, thou wistful moon."

These are all part of the word music; they are not only a charm in themselves, they are significant—a guide to subject-matter, to details of the picture.

But there are rarer touches than these in the expression of the poet's thought.

*Make haste to mount, thou wistful moon,  
Make haste to wake the nightingale:  
Let silence set the world in tune  
To hearken to that wordless tale  
Which warbles from the nightingale.*

Look at the suggestive line—

*Let silence set the world in tune.*

Let the world leave off its chattering, its noisy business. Be still, so shall you be in tune with the nightingale's song, so hear it and enjoy it.

Listen to another rare suggestion—

*O herald skylark, stay thy flight;*

and yet another in the closing lines—

*To-morrow thou shalt hoist the sail;*

*Leave us to-night the nightingale.*

The lark, herald of the morn, when the new day really dawns will take its upward flight, as a ship hoists its sails. When does a ship hoist sails? (N.B. "They hoisted their sails on Monenday morn."—*Sir Patrick Spens*.)

With these points in mind, the teacher reads the poem the second time. If the teacher knows these things they will influence her interpretation as she reads. Here, as elsewhere, knowledge is power.

*Suggested Procedure*

1. *Questions.* (a) What is the emotion (the feeling) expressed in the poem? . . . Yes, and it is genuine, true.

(b) What is the prosaic fact, the prosaic substance as it would appear to the unimaginative?

2. *Reading.* Listen while I read it again that we may capture the mood of the poem and forget prosaic facts. Listen to the rhythm too.

3. *Explanations.* There are two or three words used in a beautiful way but with unusual meanings. Can you tell me any word that struck you thus? Look at the text. . . .

The teacher must see that the class *ends* by understanding "herald," "set the world in tune," "hoist the sail."

4. *Music of the Verse and its Pattern.* Did you like its music? Just show me the movement of its rhythm. Not just a line, but a whole stanza—5 lines of 4 rising dissyllabics.

5. The final reading.

11- Year-Olds: "The Lady of Shalott": Introduction

This poem is a fantasy beautifully conceived and perfectly carried out. The story is the deliberate invention of the poet, who creates arbitrarily, as his central figure, the only kind of character that could move naturally in, and fit perfectly, the dream world he creates for her.

The teacher's introduction depends on the children's knowledge of Arthur's Knights, the Round Table, and of Lancelot in particular. If she knows that they have read and understood such stories, she may choose to introduce "The Lady of Shalott" by questions calculated to focus attention on the Round Table and its code, those knights whom the lady sees riding two and two in the magic mirror, "loyal knights and true"; and most admired of them all, and by them all, Lancelot.

The teacher must certainly know Malory's account of the ideal knight; it is simple, straightforward, lucid, and persuasive; it meets her present need.

LANCELOT, THE IDEAL KNIGHT

Thou wert the *courtliest* knight that ever bare shield, and thou wert the *truest* lover among sinful men that ever loved woman, and thou wert the *kindest* man that ever struck with sword, and thou wert the *goodliest* person that ever came among the crowd of knights, and thou wert the *meekest* man and the *gentlest* that ever ate in hall among ladies, and thou wert the *sternest* knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in breast.

What does Tennyson make Arthur and Gareth say of this knight?

*And the king—*

*"Make thee my knight in secret? Yea, but he,  
Our noblest brother, and our truest man,  
And one with me in all, he needs must know";*

to which Gareth replies—

*"Let Lancelot know, my king, let Lancelot know,  
[Thy noblest and thy truest."*

And when Lancelot, following young Gareth to protect him, mistook him for the "Evening Star," their common foe, and fell upon him crying: "Stay, felon knight, I avenge thee for my friend . . .," Gareth, "At one touch of that skill'd spear, *the wonder of the world*, went sliding down."

A whole lesson might be spent profitably in preparing the way for "The Lady of Shalott";

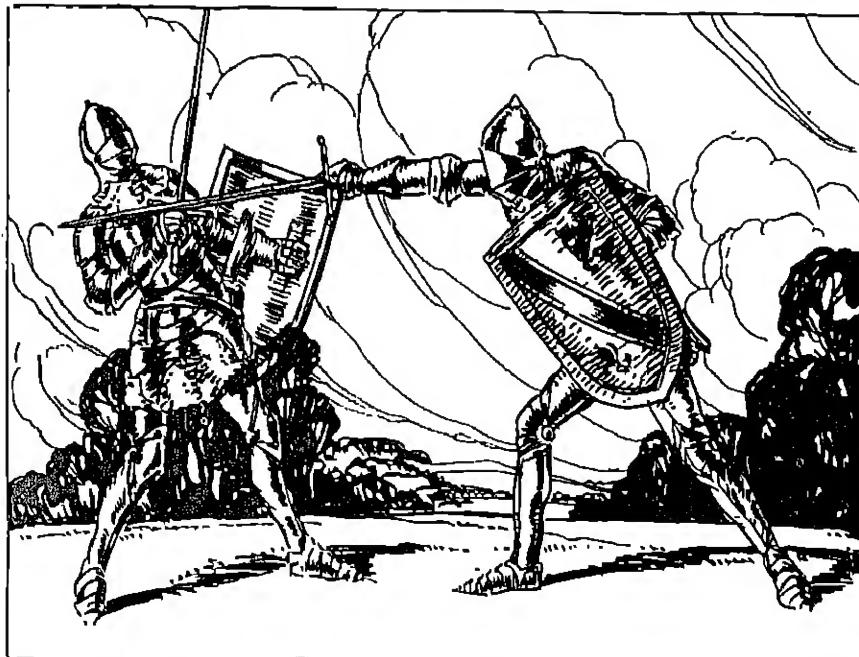


FIG. 9

"That ever struck with sword"

it is worth it. In such a preparatory lesson, illustrations of the different parts of a knight's armour could be shown: shield, baldric, greaves, helmet, and feather; while such terms as blazon should be explained by appropriate contexts. *Camelot must be made familiar.*

In the spelling lesson words such as galaxy, shallop, sheaves, churls, ambling, mischance, expanse, mused, and musing could be dealt with; during the previous week, a picture of barley and rye growing might be put on the wall; in a ballad lesson, *no matter how long beforehand*, the children should think about "a bow-shot" in connection with Robin's archery or with Locksley in *Ivanhoe*.

There cannot be too much preparation if the children's minds are to be open to receive, even in part, the beauties of a masterpiece. But the preparation must be tactfully managed; words and phrases should be merged into other lessons where "spade" work is confessedly done, but the immediate aim, understanding of the masterpiece soon to be presented to the class, not so much as hinted at.

If the way has been prepared as indicated above, the teacher's course is clear. "The poem is called 'The Lady of Shalott,' and it is about the Lady of Shalott, but *Lancelot* comes into the story. We shall see *Lancelot* as we have never yet seen him. Listen!" A very few simple words will introduce the poem adequately.

### *The Next Step : Hearing the Poem*

The teacher reads the poem through. This rule is accepted so generally that discussion seems unnecessary; and yet many teachers confess that some classes, in no way bored by literature as a rule, do not react, as authorities take it for granted that they will, to poems like this, and even to "The Pied Piper." One of these latter failures was followed up closely, and the mentality of the children was watched in other lessons. The obstacle to appreciation here was undoubtedly language; *every other word*, in what seems ordinary phrasing, was a difficulty. A given word is new, it is followed by words not new perhaps but with a shade of meaning that is puzzling, and so on. What is worse, the difficulty is cumulative.

The teacher can mend matters if, in set language periods on the time-table, the class study and practise the mother tongue. They should learn (1) to recognize words *denoting actions*, however extraordinary they may seem, (2) to attach epithets distinguishing words, attributes, to the right persons and things, (3) to have an increasing working vocabulary.

Verbal difficulties peculiar to a given poem should be cleared away beforehand, and in her own reading the teacher should remember the disabilities of the children, and deliberately think out ways of "getting the poem over," consciously, but not self-consciously, interpreting.

### *Hints for Reading*

The teacher, before reading the poem to the class, should become well acquainted with certain points.

The theme is developed and completed in 19 stanzas of 9 lines each. These stanzas are linked by the two most prominent lines, the key to the whole—the fifth and the ninth, e.g.—

*Shimming down to Camelot*  
 { *The Lady of Shalott . . .*  
 { *Flowing down to Camelot*  
 { *The Lady of Shalott.*

In each verse we are reminded in plain terms of the link between Camelot and Shalott—a mystic link, but that need not trouble us here. Life comes and goes from Camelot to Shalott in every verse except one, the first of Part III, where bold Sir *Lancelot*, the flower of chivalry, in his sole person, embodies Camelot.

The rhyme scheme centres round "Shalott" and "Camelot"; it goes *a a a a B c c c B*. It is written thus because the reader ought to feel the poem flowing to the "B" lines. The poet guides us toward them by sound and by sense; following his eloquent direction, we should make for these two short lines as points of rest, as goals attained, throughout the poem.

"The Lady of Shalott" is a line of three beats, "of" must be given the value of an accented syllable in time, in poise, not in jarring loudness. Compare it with another last line such as "Beside remote Shalott," and you will get its movement.

Take the beautiful first stanza of Part III and examine it.

*A Bow-shot from her bower-eaves,  
He rode between the barley-sheaves,  
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,  
And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd  
To a lady in his shield,  
That sparkled on the yellow field  
Beside remote Shalott.*

a  
a  
a  
a  
B  
c  
c  
c  
B

The management of the fifth and ninth lines is among the signal rhythmical triumphs of Tennyson. The preceding lines travel to that wonderful short line—

*Of bold Sir Lancelot.*

In every verse, whether it be grave or gay, heavy or light, slow or hurried, the points of rest never change: they are always the two short lines of the stanza, the fifth and the ninth.

It is obvious, then, that the reader who reads the text as if it were prose, and ignores this vital point, is farther than she thinks from the spirit of the poem.

### Tone

“The Lady of Shalott” is a fantasy. The story is free of time and place, free of the bonds of reality except at one point to be indicated later. This being so, the poet, true artist as he is, nowhere touches the deeps of gloom; we mislead ourselves if we think four grey walls and a



FIG. 10

“Out upon the wharfs they came, Knight and burgher, lord and dame.”

The following three take on their right movement only when the reader looks ahead and sees in that 3-foot line a culmination.

funeral are to wear the pall of actual life. The four grey walls “Overlook a space of flowers;” the funeral has as its accompaniments, plumes

and lights and music; and these are "magic sights" that the Lady of Shalott *delights to weave* in her endless web. The tone is never gloomy, not even at the end. We take our cue from Lancelot—

*But Lancelot mused a little space;  
He said, "She has a lovely face;  
God in his mercy lend her Grace,  
The Lady of Shalott."*

*Part I.* The tone of the opening stanza should be quiet and convincing, showing that *Camelot exists*. Creators of fantasy are always particular as to detail. With "the people gazing where the lilies blow" we awaken curiosity about the island there below, "The island of Shalott."

The second verse continues to establish the island with its willows and aspens; we rear the four grey walls and four grey towers, awakening curiosity in our hearers, which deepens when we come to *The silent isle* that embowers the lady.

Real barley and rye, real fields and lilies, real willows, and now real barges traile by real horses! But how heavy the barges, how slow the horses, how heavy and slow the rhythm sounds, bearing out the sense, reinforcing it. The shallop, in comparison, belongs to fairyland. These lines are *touched very lightly* and with a suggestion of mystery which deepens with the following lines.

In *Part II* the mysterious tone continues, but there is neither gloom nor horror. The web with colours *gay* is the keynote. "I am half sick of shadows" should come as a *surprise*. What will happen next?

The most brilliant words form the design.

In *Part III* the reader delights in the perfect description of the perfect knight. Gladness rings in every note so that the contrast in the last stanza of the passage is perceptible to all; she left the web, she left the loom.

In *Part IV* the reader's aim should be to convey appreciation of beauty and quietude. There is dramatic satisfaction, too, in the lady's coming to Camelot, a certain admiration for her presence of mind in writing her name on the prow, and, best of all, in Lancelot's gentle tribute to the gleaming shape that floated, silent, into Camelot.

### After the Reading

The teacher hopes that the children have received a clear impression of beauty in both matter and form; by a sympathetic rendering she has conveyed to them the emotional tone of the masterpiece.

The children might be asked if there is any part they would like to hear again during the remaining five minutes. If the poem has really reached the children it is generally best to leave it alone for the time being. Follow the lead the children give here, look at greaves and shields and anything they please, and then read *the part the majority would like*, to end the lesson.

But the teacher must come to grips with an important poem like this at some time. There must be a certain amount of work calculated to prove how much has "got over" to the class; the discovery must be the basis of future training. What they have taken in must be followed up, impressions made must be deepened.

*Part I.* (1) If the children can read well, they might be asked to read it silently. It is a good device to tell them that the lesson will be on *Part I*, that it would be a help if each girl would put a hand up when she had reached the end; she would then be free to re-read the passage, or to read on to the end of the poem. The teacher can see in this way the average amount of time required, and know when to say "Time is up."

(2) The children close books.

(3) The teacher announces that she is going to build up the landscape on the blackboard (in words or in a drawing, either will do), and that they must supply the details. What is the feature of the landscape that it would be wise to begin with? The river. If the teacher cannot draw, two long lines, diagram-wise, will do perfectly. "Say all the river lines while I draw, please." She prompts the class if necessary, but she gets them to repeat—

*"On either side the river lie," etc.*

"Why is the river so important for our story? Yes, but give me lines if you can". -

*By the island in the river  
Flowing down to Camelot.*

"What is the name of the island. What is

the next important feature of the landscape? Yes. How many lines about Camelot can you remember?" One child puts the other right, the teacher listens for *intonation and rhythm*, certain lines are memorized in the most natural way.

"What must be put on the island? What else?" "A space of flowers." "Tell me one thing more about the island before we leave it—in the same rhyme scheme as 'towers,' 'flowers.'" The teacher gets from one child, and makes all repeat rhythmically and softly—

*And the silent isle imbowers  
The Lady of Shalott.*

"We have the island down here, Camelot right away in the distance there, here is the river leading from one to the other. What do we see on the river banks? Where does the road run? What trees border the river? Have you ever seen a willow or an aspen? Here are pictures of both."

In this way the teacher gets the people *looking down* curiously at the island in the river; the traffic in the form of heavy barges; in the barley the reapers. "And if we went in the very early morning we might meet with an adventure as the reapers did. What was that?"

The teacher reads the section through as a reward.

*Part II.* The children might be asked after study of the text, or, if they read very badly, after hearing the teacher read the passage again, to plan with chalk on a sheet of brown paper the figures or patterns and colours of the magic web. Blocked lines would serve the purpose quite well.

The Lady of Shalott wove the scenes of life, but as seen through the mirror; the highway winding down to Camelot, the river eddy whirling, the surly village churls, the red cloaks of market girls, a troop of happy damsels, an abbot on horseback, a curly shepherd lad, a long-hair'd page clad in crimson, and so on.

As the children read out the answers, the teacher requires them to remember the original line, and sometimes demands the following lines, with the hint that they are "in the same rhyme scheme."

The teacher reads the section through. The class enjoy the rhythm.

*Part III.* (a) The class, with books open, find all the "shining epithets" that describe the sun shining on Sir Lancelot's armour as he rode "Beside remote Shalott"—

"The sun came dazzling . . .  
And flamed upon the brazen greaves . . ."  
". . . shield that sparkled on the yellow  
field"  
"The gemmy bridle glitter'd . . ."  
"All in the blue unclouded weather  
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle leather."  
"The helmet and the helmet feather  
Burn'd like one burning flame together."  
His brow "glow'd" in sunlight.  
His warhorse trod on *burnished* hooves.  
And so on.

Having read and re-read the passage to find "one more," and "still another," the children have made it their own.

(b) The teacher takes the passage through with strict attention to rhythm. The children are still more familiar with it.

(c) She gives them time to learn the verse they like best.

(d) She suggests they complete the passage or attempt any other passage in their own time.

*Part IV.* 1. Let the children follow events here point by point, and become clear as to the story.

2. What was the weather like? Describe the aspects of Nature indicated here. What season was it? Quote the melancholy lines. Take them rhythmically, telling children to drag out the trailing words with heavy arm movements—

*The broad stream in his banks—complaining,  
Heavily the low sky raining.*

Contrast the mournful chant with the early fairy song.

3. Build up, children supplying the detail, and then quoting the line, the last scene of all—wharfs, knight, burgher, lord, and dame, to the last line.

4. All through the course the teacher should keep a vigilant eye on the art schemes for the class, and seize the happy moment when real correlation becomes a means of true progress.

5. The little course of lessons should end with a final reading of the masterpiece.

*"The Poet's Song" (11-Year-Olds)*

Tennyson's "The Poet's Song" helps a class that has appreciated Christina Rossetti's "Nightingale" to deepen as well as multiply certain impressions. The poet in the latter was enchanted by the nightingale's song; now we have an imagined and convincing record of what the bird might well think of human song, inspired and aspiring.

Tennyson's poem is suitable for older children, but it might be used to follow Stephens' "The Rivals" taken at a rather earlier stage.

Can the teacher do anything to get this song over to the children? Is this one of the poems that can be followed up with benefit to the class, or is it best left alone? Much depends on how much spade work the teacher has done, preparing for other poems of the group in which this is placed. Anyway, let the teacher be sure that, if she leaves the masterpiece without comment, it is by choice after reflection, not because she cannot find anything to say.

Resolve the poem into its elements. *There is incident of a kind.* The poet leaves town and street, seeks a lonely place, and sings. The song is so sweet that untamed things stay their wonted course to listen; most wonderful of all the nightingale, that "immortal bird," that sings of "eternal passion, eternal pain," pays tribute.

Now if this were all we should not waste a moment more upon it. Not only is what the poet says a very different thing, but "by its fruits" we know the difference. There is a stimulus in Tennyson's lines that gives us power. We see the strange thing he sees, and as he sees it, and feel, too, something like the emotion that he felt in seeing and creating.

What does the poet actually say?

## THE POET'S SONG

*The rain had fallen, the poet arose,  
He pass'd by the town and out of the street,  
A light wind blew from the gates of the sun,  
And waves of shadow went over the wheat,  
And he sat him down in a lonely place,  
And chanted a melody loud and sweet,  
That made the wild swan pause in her cloud,  
And the lark drop down at his feet.*

This is the first verse. The *rain had fallen*. The rain is over; think of a rain-washed town, and then think of rain-refreshed fields in the country. You lift your eyes, but you might as well close them, for you are looking back to, thinking back to, and imagining a scene very different from the actual view, whatever it be, that is before you. This is the response that that one thought or image "The rain had fallen" has awakened in you; you have your vision too.

"A light wind blew from the gates of the sun." Why a light wind? Is it merely a sound or is the word a *genuine epithet*? Only a light wind would cause "waves of shadow" to go over the wheat and remain perceptible. Again the inner eye sees visions of long waving grass, and waves of shadow over the green, and the feeling of the present is lost in the emotion of the past. "Light" is significant.

And while the poet chants "his melody loud and sweet" what do we see? *A series of pictures.* The wild swan in her cloud, the lark not rising but dropping down to the very ground at the feet of the solitary figure: the swallow turning his back on the fly, the wild hawk, forgetful of his prey, gripped in his talons, staring at the singer. Then comes the *emotional thought*, and it seems to come most fitly from the nightingale, singer of requiems—

*And the nightingale thought,*

*"I have sung many songs,  
But never a one so gay,  
For he sings of what the world will be  
When the years have died away."*

This from the poet who wrote in "In Memoriam"—

*Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.*

*Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.*

*Form*

This is a song. Time spent in hearing the whole melody is time well spent. What is the

secret of its wonderful rhythm by which it surpasses in expressiveness and in suggestion any conceivable prose version?

The *pause* is used in these lines most effectively; it coincides with the completion of the

Keep those even lines short; do not read them adding unconsciously a fourth silent beat—this would slacken the speed and lower the tension. The poet means the short line to help in conveying the heightened emotional level.

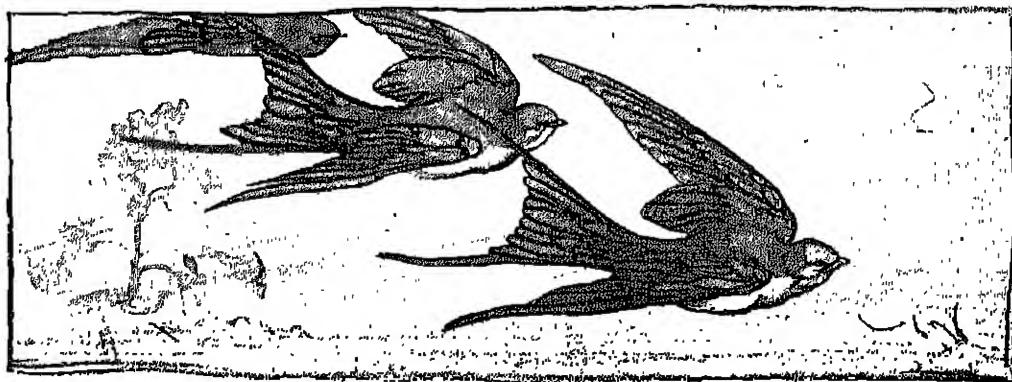


image. "The rain had fallen," "he pass'd by the town," "The swallow stopt," "the wild hawk stood."

There is no sign of effort or deliberate arrangement, and yet the sounds fall most melodiously on the ear. *Out, down, loud, cloud, down, down* (on his beak), *town* represent the sound that occurs most frequently, but they are well separated from one another.

The rhyme scheme is unusual. The verse consists of eight lines, and the rhymes go thus: *a b c b d b e b*; so that one sound occurs four times, while the alternate lines are unrhymed. The words at the ends of the lines should, of course, be given their full prominence in reading; the ear has then the gratification of hearing the sound expected, or the surprise of a new one. All the words that are given prominence here are sonorous and beautiful.

The second verse has a change in structure.

*The swallow stopt as he hunted the fly*

*The snake slipt under a spray* (3 feet)

*The wild hawk stood with the down on his beak,*

*And stáred with his foot on the prey*, (3 feet).

etc.

### *Pace*

The song goes lightly and rejoicing is in the air. Is it not written in rising trisyllabics? This measure indicates the pace—a most important point. There are many substitutions, all with happy effect. The dissyllabic opening of lines enables the reader to get a grip before she carols on: "The rain," "He passed," "A light," "And waves."

But the most remarkable effect of poise is given by the rhythmical disposition of such sonorous sounds as *swan*, *drop*, *wind*, *hawk*, *slipt*: They are used as unaccented syllables but, if rendered correctly, are the means of completing the melody. They should not be slithered over; neither should they be emphasized as if they bore beats.

### *Possibilities of the Song*

What the teacher may do with this poem is now apparent.

1. Awaken emotional response.

(a) Convey the beauty of the song. The poet's strain is gay, rapturous. There must be no weary plodding in the teacher's interpretation.

The trisyllabics are taken lightly.

(b) Remember that the full melody depends

on lines containing sonorous but unaccented sounds.

*A light wind blew from the gates of the sun.*

*That made the wild swan pause in her cloud.*

(c) Mark the final syllables of the line. *This is the teacher's part*: interpretation of emotion and rhythm.

2. Comment on one or two points—not more.

3. Educe from the children the pictures to be seen, the images that come before the mind.

Let them shut their eyes and see the picture with the inner eye.

4. A word of appreciation of the nightingale's thought, Tennyson's thought.

5. During some future lesson follow up this poem by contrasting it with Christina Rossetti's aspiration, in "The Nightingale," and again with Stephens' "The Rivals," or any other bird songs that invite comparison.

*N.B.* All comments are made with the sole purpose of revealing the *quality* of the masterpiece—genuine emotion perfectly expressed.

6. The whole poem should be committed to memory.

7. The art lesson might give opportunities of self-expression, the poem contains promising studies.

8. Coleridge's poem "Answer to a Child's Question" is one of the best poems to be taken with this, to encourage thought.

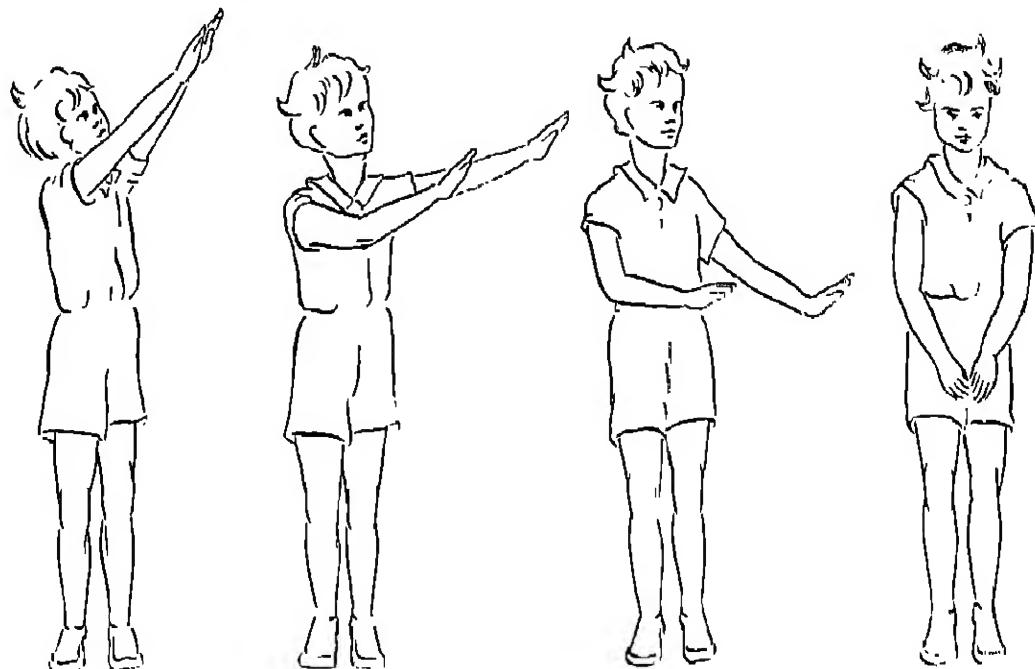


FIG. 11

*Beating the Rhythm of a Line of 4 feet in Falling Measure*

Lessons in rhythm should be given to Juniors, with familiar rhymes: for a rising measure they beat upward. The teacher reads and the children interpret the rhythm with their hands before joining in interpreting the rhyme by words.

## BALLADS

The ballads move to a tune. They are simple, full of action, dialogue, dramatic situations.

1. After reading the ballad once, the teacher should encourage the children to join in the refrain.

2. The dramatic method should then be used, even if the dialogue is brief.

3. The children should tackle the ballad and see how much of the mere narrative can be changed into scenery, properties, and *action*, and decide which verses must be kept verbal and left to "chorus." The aim is that they should know the ballad.

4. It is always possible to make certain changes, so that indirect speech becomes dialogue; the dramatic method is the best way of showing the difference between "direct and indirect speech."

"Tainlin" might be read *twice*, and left at that as a fairy story, but there are other methods for different ballads.

"Hind Horn" and "Thomas the Rhymer" charm children of 9.

### Hind Horn (9-Year-Olds)

1. The teacher reads "Hind Horn" through. She tells the class to listen carefully, as she wishes them to choose the different characters and arrange the story in scenes.

2. When she reads it the second time *they take up the half refrain about the beggar and What News!*

3. Questions. (a) What is the first thing that happened?

*In Scotland there was a baby born.  
And his name it was called young Hind Horn.*

(b) What is the next thing we are told?

*He sent a letter to our king*

*That he was in love with his daughter Jean.*

(c) How much time passed between those two happenings? What are we told in the first two lines? The baby is born. What is told in the next two lines? He has grown up between. Hind Horn is a young man. The ballads waste no time in unnecessary detail.

(d) The ballad says "*He's gien to her a silver wand.*"

Suppose we could hear Hind Horn *himself* speaking to Jean, what would he say?

*I give to you a silver wand  
With seven living lavrocks sitting thereon.*

The ballad says: "*She's gien to him . . .*"; if we could hear Jean *herself* speaking, how would she put it? *I.*

*I give to you a diamond ring  
With seven bright diamonds set therein,  
When this ring grows pale and wan  
You may know by it my love is gone.*

(e) The very next verse says: "One day as he looked his ring upon . . ."



FIG. 12

*"Where gat ye this, by sea or land,  
Or gat ye this of a dead man's hand?"*

What happened after that last speech of Jean's? Children are generally eloquent over the farewell and departure.

(f) What did Hind Horn do? "He left the sea and came to land." So he must have gone to sea.

And *what happened?* This question is seldom necessary, as, having taken up the refrain when the lesson began, the children know it.

*And the first he met was an old beggar man.*

And so on.

4. *Work requiring Thought.* The teacher then gets the children to divide the story into its sections: I. The scene with Jean and the parting. II. Hind Horn's meeting with the beggar and the exchange of dress, etc. III. His arrival just in time to stop Jean's wedding.

5. The teacher requires her class to make another kind of effort. On the slips of paper in front of them they write down the names of every person who plays a part in this story *whether he speaks or not.*

Correction is done on the spot.

6. *Selection of Cast.* "Now we are going to choose our actors." Great excitement is shown at this statement. "Which do you think is the hardest part to act?" Discussion follows. Then come reference to the text, and *listening to it again* while the teacher, free from self-consciousness, does her utmost to act the parts and show how difficult the beggar man is, with his wilfulness and his touch of malice.

"We want the very best Hind Horn we can get, so suggest two or three, they shall come out and read or say the part, and we'll choose the one most like Horn."

By the time the parts are chosen the would-be actors know all the parts. In a very simple and natural way, the judgment of the children is being trained.



FIG. 13  
*A Twelfth Century Shoe*

### *Sir Patrick Spens (9- and 10-Year-Olds)*

The teacher who proposes to take this ballad with a class resolves it into its elements first of all.

1. It is a story and an excellent story.
2. There is dialogue and of a spirited kind.
3. The diction is simple, but there are a few difficulties.
4. The verse goes smoothly, the rhythm is marked.

5. As the story is told, Sir Patrick is indeed the central figure, though other persons play interesting *rôles.*

Were we to summarize the story to illustrate that Sir Patrick is indeed the central figure, our résumé would run thus: Different personages say

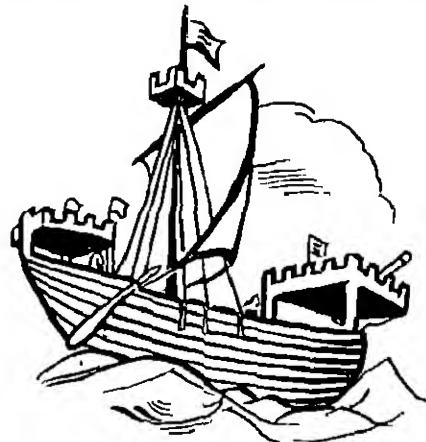


FIG. 14  
*A Ship of the Thirteenth Century*

certain things to the knight, he reacts to these, and his characteristic deeds bring about the *dénouement.* This is the state of affairs in this particular ballad. Had Sir Patrick been a man of a different temperament, events would have taken a different turn.

6. There is then the clash of human temperaments (the men of Norroway and Sir Patrick).

7. There is the war of the elements against the sailor-knight as he pursues his impetuous way in spite of the supernatural warning.

8. There is the tragedy of the "missing" ship, and hope deferred in the hearts of those who watch and wait in Dunfermline town.

9. There are many points outside the bounds of a *summary*.

The tale is told, not as summarized here, but in a way that sweeps us off our feet.

The teacher's aim is to get the *wonderful story* over to the children so that *they may be touched and swept off their feet*. They cannot read it for themselves with this effect; reading is still a laborious process with them.

Having thoroughly prepared the ballad, noted the different states of tension, and thought out which verses would be rendered appropriately by low, quiet tones, which by loud tones, which with the voice at its normal pitch, and so on, the teacher reads it rhythmically to her class.

Boys and girls always like this ballad well enough to hear it read twice.

Now the teacher wants to make the text familiar. She suggests that the children dramatize it; they agree enthusiastically, *boys as well as girls*. "Let us begin," says the teacher. But how does she begin? She gives out hectographed copies of parts of the ballad (if she has no books) to be used as shown below. "I am going to read the first part of the ballad to you again, and I want you to find the *speakers*, and what they say. Put your hands up as soon as some one speaks, and put them down when he leaves off speaking."

The children, by listening, recognize from the sense, helped by the teacher's dramatic interpretation, what the king says, the elder knight's suggestion, Sir Patrick's reception of the message, his resolution.

The teacher tells the children that those chosen for these three parts will have to say these speeches. "Let us practise them."

### *Finding and Unconsciously Learning the Speeches*

She divides the class into three. She calls upon them to render the speeches *rhythmically*. The teacher begins, reading the first lines with marked rhythm, setting an example.

"The King sits in Dunfermline town (4 fl.)  
Drinking the blude-red wine." (3 fl.)

DIVISION I take up—

"O whare will I get a skeely skipper,  
To sail this new ship of mine."

By the time the teacher has given discreet coaching as to vowels, intonation, the time given to unaccented syllables, the way to deal with

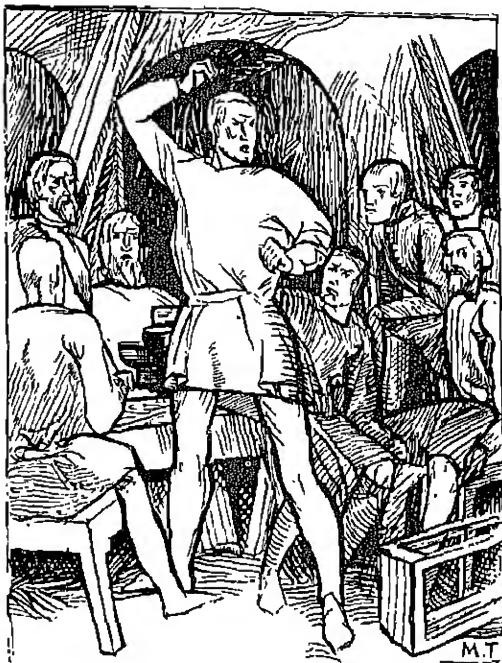


FIG. 15  
*Sir Patrick Spens*

Ye lie, ye lie, ye liars loud,  
Fu' loud I hear ye lie!

For I brought as mickle white monie  
As gane my men and me—  
And I brought a hale-fou' gude red goud  
Out-oir the sea with me.

Mak' ready, mak' ready, my merry men a'!  
Our gude ship sails the morn.

*Costume.* Note hose and tunic—tunics cut to hang in folds at the side.

long but unaccented sounds like "red" and "new," all the children know these lines.

The teacher goes on—

"O up and spak' an eldern knight,  
Sat at the King's right knee."

DIVISION II take up—

"Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor  
That ever sailed the sea."

After a little practice with the trisyllabic "Is the best," the archaic accentuation of sailor, and the teacher's insistence on full vowel rendering of "sea," the boys know this by heart.

The teacher now cunningly asks the boys in Divisions II and III to beat time for her *while she tells what* the king did. The "kings" (Division I) had better practise what they are going to do when they act it.

The teacher reads—

"Our king has written a braid letter, (4 ft.)  
And sealed it with his hand, (3 ft.)  
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens. (4 ft.)  
Was walking on the strand." (3 ft.)

The same method can be followed with Sir Patrick's speech, the children of the third division concentrating on their part. The same method can be followed with the rest of the poem. By the teacher's focusing their attention on the good vowelling, clear rhythm, and right intonation, the children have been lured into *concentrating on the dialogue* as a preliminary to acting the ballad.

### Selection of Cast

The children *now have a standard*. The king, the eldern knight, Sir Patrick, and the narrator speak in different tones; they have different kinds of things to say; the tone approximates to the matter.

The teacher invites each division to *select* two or three kings, knights, or Sir Patricks. Then the selected kings stand out and repeat their speeches; they are on their mettle. The children soon learn to distinguish and select which is most like the character. Meanwhile, this is the process of selection and rejection—excellent training in the approach to literature and afterwards. When the trial is over, and the most satisfactory candidate elected, every-

body knows everybody else's part, and everybody has a good idea of the kind of individual to be impersonated. Sir Patrick has his note, the king his, and the eldern knight his, the actors distinguish them one from the other, and take pride in doing so. We call this kind of lesson *selection of cast*.

### Dramatis Personae

"What other characters do we want? Listen and take note while I read it through once more." An incentive is thus given for listening once more. The teacher must have the list at her finger tips.

1. The messenger to Sir Patrick.
2. The sailor who saw the new moon, "with the auld moon in her arm."
3. The men who hoisted their sails "on Monenday morn."
4. The Scots' lords.
5. Those who fetched "the web o' the silken cloth."
6. The ladies who wrung their fingers
7. The maidens who tore their hair.
8. The ladies with fans in their hands.
9. The maidens with kaims in their hair.
- 10 and 11. The king's daughter o' Norroway, and the lords o' Norroway.
12. The narrator.

Nos. 1, 4, and 10 are generally overlooked. These personages, once remote, are now brought nearer to the children, who see the mass of people affected—and by what agency? A storm at sea. This, then, is the story of a *shipwreck*.

*The Setting.* The teacher tells the children that they know the story well enough now to be able to tell by *reading it for themselves* how often the scene changes. Here they use their hectographed copies or books; and, with this incentive, go eagerly through the text.

*Actions.* All actions should be in ballad rhythm. When the children have really *dramatized the ballad* after the preliminaries given above, they should be required to listen, during a lesson in literature, to the ballad read through. This reading will be to them a different thing from the first reading. They have, in the interval, acquired knowledge.

*Robin Hood and Will Stutley*  
(11-Year-Olds)

There are strong elements of appeal here that are common to the Robin Hood ballads—

1. The refrain. It is always musical; children repeat it with delight and memorize it with ease. Any poem with a refrain is attractive.

2. This particular refrain embodies the *love of Nature* that characterizes the yeomen, and the makers of ballad songs, as well as the masters of literature.

3. This ballad records another triumph for yeomen and archery, the thrill of a rescue.

4. It gives an example of the loyalty of the group to one of their body, and of touching faith of the man in his "noble master."

5. There is the emotional relief at the unexpected escape, the joy of reunion, and above all the joy of the greenwood.

These are all very lightly touched, very simply told, but they are forces that awaken response. They are the points that matter.

*Robin Hood and Will Stutley* (showing how Robin rescued his follower from the sheriff and his men, who were going to hang him) always succeeds.

The ballad opens thus—

(A) *When Robin Hood in the greenwood stood*  
*Derry derry down* (3 ft.)  
*Under the greenwood tree* (3 ft.)  
*Tidings they came to him with speed,*  
*Tidings for certainty,*  
*Hey down, derry derry down* (4 ft.).

(B) *That Will Stutley surprised was,*  
*And eke in prison lay;*  
*Three varlets that the king had hir'd*  
*Did likely him betray.*

How do we deal with this? Work at the rhythm of the opening stanza. Use the privilege of repeating phrases as song-writers do, and make a grand speech-chanted chorus.

A. Divide the class into three.

Div. I. *When Robin Hood in the greenwood stood.*

Div. II. (Softly) *Derry derry down.*  
Div. III. *Under the greenwood tree.*  
Div. I. *Tidings they came to him with speed,*  
Div. II. *Tidings for certainty*  
Div. III. *Under the greenwood tree.*  
All (loudly) *Hey down, derry derry down,*  
*Hey down, derry derry down.*

Have a jolly time, let the children move their arms, but be strict about rhythm. Be careful, too, about the pronunciation of "wood" and "stood," with lips well forward as for whistling; *ow* in "down" is generally badly produced. The mouth must be egg-shaped, *not* in a broad smiling position. With attention to these sounds and observing the difference between lines of 4 ft. and lines of 3 ft., the children get a wonderful effect.

*B* is changed into the actual speech of the messenger; change "That" into "Robin." The stage direction now runs: *Enter messenger breathlessly.*

SCENE I

Messenger:

*Robin! Will Stutley surprised was*  
*And eke in prison lay;*  
*Three varlets that the king had hired*  
*Did likely him betray.*

Two verses are changed in the same way to produce Robin's reply which follows immediately as now arranged. The words changed are in Roman type.

Robin:

*I swear Will Stutley shall rescued be*  
*And be brought back again;*  
*Or else shall many a gallant knight*  
*For his sake there be slain.*

The next three verses are copied, but only as stage-directions. They give information about "business." Robin clothes himself in scarlet, but his men were all in green. Every man has a good broadsword and also a good yew-bow. They all march out to lie in ambush; as they go they all chant rhythmically—

*Hey down, derry derry down,*  
*Derry derry down,*  
*Hey down, derry derry down,*  
*Under the greenwood tree.*

This is the end of the first scene. They march to rhythm. We talk of the human appeal. What is there here to "get over"? First of all there is the adventure—life in the greenwood, with its freedom and jollity. The chanted chorus encourages the feeling of exuberance. A call comes to the "free men." Responsibility is seen simply as adventure, but responsibility it

is. How do Robin and his men answer the appeal? In the usual way; this is but another illustration of his *chivalrous life in the greenwood*.

And here is another cause for pride: Robin's men are *yeomen* whose lives show splendid examples of chivalry. They arm themselves with broadswords and yew-bows. That the English yeomen were the greatest archers in



FIG. 16  
*Will Stutely and Little John Defend Themselves*

the world can be told the children in a context such as this.

## SCENE II

*Enter ancient Palmer, moving very slowly. Enter the adventurers cautiously. [How would they come?] Robin sends one of his men to ask the old Palmer for news. The "man" skirts the track so that the stranger may not guess where the yeomen are hidden. The stranger proves to be a friend. Will Stutley's master would not allow him to die if he knew of it.*

Palmer:

*O had his noble master known  
He would some succour send.  
A few of his bold yeomanry  
Full soon would fetch him hence.*

Will Stutley and the sheriff's men are seen in the distance.

Will Stutley:

*Now seeing that I needs must die  
Grant one boon to me!  
For my noble master ne'er had man  
That yet was hanged on tree.  
  
Give me a sword all in my hand,  
And let me be unbound.  
And with thee and thy men I'll fight,  
Till I lie dead on the ground.*

The sheriff refuses.

Will Stutley:

*Do but unbind my hands, I pray,  
I will no weapons crave;  
And if I be hanged this day,  
Damnation let me have.*

Sheriff:

*Oh no! oh no! Will Stutley!  
Thou shalt on gallows die!  
Ay! and so shall thy master too,  
If ever in me it lie.*

Stutley:

*O dastard coward, O dastard coward,  
Faint-hearted, peasant slave!  
If ever my master do thee meet,  
Thou shalt thy payment have.*

Little John comes up, talks with sheriff—a dramatic moment. He cuts Stutley's bonds adroitly, twitches a sword from one of the sheriff's men, and gives it to Stutley. (Very exciting business this.)

Little John (quickly):

*Here Will Stutley, take thou this same,  
Thou canst it better sway;  
And here defend thyself awhile,  
For aid will come straightway.*

Enter Robin and his men. An arrow comes from Robin's bow. The sheriff and his men flee.

Loud laughter from Robin's men and a *Hey down, derry derry down*.

Will Stutley (with something of awe in his voice):

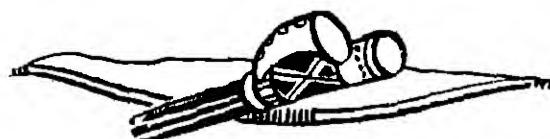
*I little thought, oh merry men all,  
When I came to this place,  
For to have met with Little John  
Or have seen my master's face.*

Robin:

*And once again my fellows dear,  
We shall in the greenwoods meet,  
Where we shall make our bow-strings twang,  
Music for us most meet.*

All marching back to their special retreat in the greenwood which they love, chant rhythmically—

*Hey down, derry derry down  
Derry derry down.  
Hey down, derry derry down,  
Under the greenwood tree.*



## ACTION AND NARRATIVE

## I. "Hiawatha"

"Hiawatha" has a secure place in the hearts of children; for this reason alone, it has claims on the time-table throughout the Junior School, and the Senior, too.

Longfellow's song is addressed to all,

*Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,  
Ye who love the haunts of Nature,  
Love the sunshine of the meadow,  
Love the shadow of the forest.*

and children of all ages respond with enthusiasm. The now familiar song was gathered from the prairies and "forests primeval"; the singer found his story—

*In the birds' nests of the forest,  
In the lodges of the beaver,  
In the hoof prints of the bison,  
In the eyrie of the eagle.*

It is a myth of the Indian Prometheus, a song of Nature, and a story of adventure.

From this wealth of material in such enchanting form, the teacher has only to choose what will appeal *immediately* to the class for whom he is planning his lessons; he has only to decide which, of all the pleasing selections possible, will best fit in with, because it belongs to, that range of ideas on which the child is being induced to concentrate. No selection is sound that is not based on such a consideration as this.

In the first place, we know that the child delights in rhythm. We are, therefore, safe in approaching "Hiawatha" rhythmically. Its form is modelled on the Finnish epic "Kalevala." Longfellow absorbs its quality and adds something to it. The product is interesting. It is worth while, then, to present *long passages*, for it is in long passages that one catches the poet's movement best. There are at least three methods that combine well with direct rhythmical approach to such verse—

(a) Swaying of the body in interpretation of the rhythm, to feel its sweep.

(b) Appropriate action, illustrating the subject-matter, but controlled by the rhythm; where there is dialogue, let rhythm still be the controlling factor; arrange for different speakers.

(c) The ordinary dramatic production of matter in verse form.

## Method A. Rhythm

1. Hiawatha's slumber song, for a swaying movement—

*Ew-a yea! my little violet!  
Who is this, that lights the wigwam?  
Ew-a yea! my little violet!*

2. The song Nokomis taught the little Hiawatha.

3. A long passage where the teacher helps the children to feel a line of four measures, falling, not rising, e.g.—

*Then the little Hiawatha  
Learned of every bird its language.  
Learned their names and all their secrets,  
How they built their nests in summer . . .*

Or 4.

*Then began the deadly conflict.  
Hand to hand among the mountains; . . .*

Children enjoy solving a rhythmical problem by feeling for it; they never tire of repeating lines, sounding them, testing subject-matter and tone, etc. Rhythm lures them into endless repetition. The result is that the passage, taken rhythmically with a class, will be memorized by that class in record time. This is as it should be.

## Method B. Rhythm with Appropriate Action

Subject-matter must influence the teacher's selection of incident. The English scheme, art and handwork, and such history and geography as are taught should *all be brought into line*. Incidents that delight children are: (1) Hiawatha's childhood, (2) his preparations for the journey to the land of the west wind, (3) the building and sailing of the canoe, (4) Chibiabos, the musician, (5) Hiawatha's wedding; but the whole of this long poem interests them.

*Hiawatha's Childhood*

After reading the section to them, or telling them the story adapted to their intelligence, what other way is possible? The following delightful attempt was made to realize the section from "At the door on summer evenings" to "The owl and owlet Talking, scolding at each other."

The children had made several pine trees of paper in handwork, and a number of children studied hard to reproduce the music of the



FIG. 17  
*Hiawatha and Nokomis*

pines. This was their rôle. The amount of thought and effort in play-time that went to the production of the sounds Minne-wāwa, and Mēdway-aūshka, to attain quality and correct timing, must be seen to be believed.

Then the fire-fly entered to the time set by the verse; and the twinkle of its candle (which in practice was the gleam of its electric torch) came punctually at the initial beat of every line when little Hiawatha chanted the fire-fly song Nokomis taught him.

Hiawatha changed the word "whispered" when the dialogue began, to "Nokomis, what is that, Nokomis?" so that the line should have its due length of four feet.

Nokomis, when she answered "Once a warrior, very angry," not only spoke rhythmically but wove rhythmically. (They had learnt in hand-work that Indian women were and still are adepts in the art of weaving.)

Up rose the fire-fly and torch, and Hiawatha perforce greeted it with his lovely song—

*Wah-wah-taysee, little fire-fly.  
Little, flitting, white-fire insect,  
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,  
Light me with your little candle . . .*

Here his glancing eye caught "the rainbow in the heaven." Instantly, in a tone of wonder blended with admiration, Hiawatha cried, "Nokomis! what is that, Nokomis?"

And the good Nokomis answered: "'Tis the heaven of flowers you see there . . ."

At the end of her chant, a crowd of fire-flies flitted in, and Hiawatha began his fire-fly song while they danced under the pine trees to about three lines of it, until the owls began their terrifying noises in the forest.

Hiawatha stopped his song and cried in terror—

*Nokomis! what is that, Nokomis?*

Nokomis soothingly replied, still weaving rhythmically—

*That is but the owl and owlet,  
Talking in their native language,  
Talking, scolding at each other.*

Then just as a mother would do, she left her weaving, took Hiawatha by the hand, led him to "the cradle," and rocked him to sleep with her slumber song.

*Ew-a yea! my little owlet!  
Who is this that lights the wigwam . . .*

Nokomis and Hiawatha had beautiful speaking voices; the trees made of green crinkly paper were surprisingly effective; the wind in the trees, the sound of running water, the cry of the owl, the glory of the rainbow became to this class objects of close observation and affection.

*Hiawatha's Preparations for a Journey*

It is important to let each child have, and use, his own book.

*Methods.* (a) Read the section—48 lines to "with his moccasins enchanted"—so that the children may enjoy music and matter.

(b) Reading followed by question and answer.

Read a second time, having warned the class that you expect them to know what it is all about; what happened, who did things or said things. What kind of people were they? Where were they when the narrative began? Are they in any way different when we leave off? Books or hectographed copies of the section are necessary to compel attention. If the answer is not forthcoming, the backward child might be told: "Look at lines 7-14; you will find what you want there. Answer in your own words."

(c) Form a different kind of question, making it of importance that the child should answer "in the words of the book." The teacher here aims at directing the attention of the class to a significant phrase, a fine epithet, a cause or an effect; whatever it be, it is something memorable in form.

The teacher is trying to get the class to concentrate on the text, to battle with it and find out what it means—to resolve it into its elements. What is there in these 48 lines, a rhythmical account of what? He wants to make the class *listen and think*.

In the opening section of Book IV is material worth preparing for two or three lessons. Let us begin by resolving the work into its elements, in order to find what *there is* in these 48 lines.

*The attainments of Hiawatha, now a young man.* His quality—learned in love, skilled in all craft, excellent at sport—especially running and shooting. Passionate, impatient of injustice—

*And his heart was hot within him.*

*Like a living coal his heart was.*

Yet self-controlled—

*With a smile he sat and listened,  
Uttered neither threat nor menace,  
Neither word nor look betrayed him.*

He was as fearless as he was beautiful, and could conceive a plan and carry it out without advice or help—

*I will go to Mudjekeewis.  
At the doorways of the west wind.  
At the portals of the sunset.*

And the fearless Hiawatha "Heeded not her woman's warning."

*His Dress for Travelling.* Deerskin shirt and leggings, richly adorned with quills and wampum. Eagle feathers on his head; a belt of wampum round his waist, to which the leggings were tied. The shirt hung over his breech cloth.

*Arms for Hunting.* A bow of ashwood strung with sinews of reindeer (sinews of animals used as thread) arrows of oak tipped with jasper, and winged with feathers.

*Supernatural Aids.* Magic mittens to smite rocks asunder or grind them to powder; enchanted moccasins of deerskin by means of which "At each stride a mile he measured"; they were bound round his ankles.

It would be interesting to the children and excellent training in intelligence to get together from the section of the poem with which we have been dealing *all the information* printed above. They would gain a great deal more by labouring and finding it out for themselves from their books than if the teacher dictated notes and required the class to memorize them, for it is not merely their memories which would be active but their *thinking powers*.

*Handwork* will be correlated with this type of literature to make all that is strange and remote familiar in the approved modern way. Drawing and painting will help self-expression; but before we call in these aids there is a form of direct literary training to which we can and must resort, and that is—

*Simple Lines of Research.* Set exercises giving the children an incentive to explore the text as well as other books with pictures and simple explanations that are in the classroom, e.g. require them to provide an annotated list of all the things Hiawatha thought necessary for his encounter with Mudjekeewis. State that the information will be used in practical work, and must be accurate and clear.

*Collective Work.* The teacher announces that he is going to draw Hiawatha on the blackboard, dressed for his journey. The class will supply details and direct the teacher's efforts. Instructions must be definite and concise.

The teacher may deliberately make mistakes, awakening criticism from the well-informed and thoroughly interested class.

### *Hiawatha's Sailing: Teacher's Preparation*

This episode consists of a hundred lines, but falls into two distinct stages. The first is the building of the canoe, the second Hiawatha's sailing and the work he did, helped by Kwasind, the strong man.

Let us resolve Stage I into its elements. The building of the canoe takes place "in the bosom of the forest." "The birds were singing gaily," "Summer time was coming," it was the Moon of Leaves. (The Indians measure time by moons. April is the moon of plants, May the moon of flowers.) It was in the morning. (See Larch section.)

It is to be a light, swift canoe, to look and float like a yellow leaf in autumn, like a yellow water lily.

*The birch* is a hardy forest tree; the tree Hiawatha chose grew by the Taquamenaw, a rushing river. All birches have "white skin wrappers or cloaks"—

A silvery white bark that glistens like satin. This *silver bark* is a wonderful thing. It peels off readily in large flakes which resemble tissue paper, and which look very easy to destroy, but are wonderfully tough and lasting. (Jack.)

(Illustrations to Jack's books on trees are shown to the children.)

*Dialogue.* Hiawatha to the Birch tree—

*Give me of your bark, O Birch tree,  
Lay aside your cloak, O Birch tree.*

The Birch rustled, with a sigh of patience, and said, "Take my cloak, O Hiawatha."

Hiawatha then, with his *knife*, girdled the tree just beneath its lowest branches, and above its roots, till the sap came oozing out. Then he slit the trunk from top to bottom, cleft the bark asunder, raised it with a wooden wedge, and stripped it unbroken from the trunk.

When the canoe was finished, all the lightness of the birch tree was in it.

*The cedar*, we learn from this section, has strong and pliant branches; cedar wood would steady, strengthen, make firmer the bottom of the boat. The adult mind recalls the temple of Solomon. Solomon wrote to Hiram, King of Tyre: "'There is not among us any that can *skill to hew timber* like unto the Sidonians' . . .

So he built the house and finished it, and *covered the house* with beams and boards of cedar."

The cedar is, like the birch, a forest tree; "remarkable for durability and fragrance." "The cedar grows very slowly; the tree may be 100 years old before it produces any seeds" (Jack). This prepares one for the cedar's horror when Hiawatha asks for boughs—

*Through the summit of the cedar  
Went a sound, a cry of horror,  
Went a murmur of resistance.*

But, whispering its acquiescence, it bent down and gave up its boughs.

Hiawatha then *hewed down* the boughs of the cedar, shaped them to a framework, like two bended bows.

*The larch*, we learn, has fibrous roots, which can be used for binding. The larch shivered in the air of morning, but said, "Take them all, O Hiawatha." The larch grows very rapidly.

After a young larch tree has grown to a certain height, and shed millions of its tiny needle leaves, enriching the soil, the forester thins the plantation; he cuts down a number of the young trees so that those that remain may have room to grow. (Jack.)

This explains the "Take them all" of the larch.

*The fir tree* is tall and sombre. It gives turpentine, balsam, resin from its juice. "If you cut a hole in the tree stem a thick juice will soon ooze out which hardens at once into a clear gum."

*Give me of your balm, O Fir tree !  
So to close the seams together  
That the water may not enter.*

And the Fir sobbed through all its robes of darkness, rattled like a shore with pebbles, wailed and wept, but gave up its balm.

The hedgehog gave up its quills to adorn the canoe, and Hiawatha stained them red and blue and yellow with the juice of roots and berries; after he had stained them thus, he put them like a gleaming girdle round the bows of the canoe, and for its breast he made two resplendent stars.

*Thus the Birch canoe was builded . . .*

This account describes information and underlines points in the verse on which the teacher might concentrate in planning a lesson.

## 2. *The Red-Cross Knight*

So many beautiful stories have been told of St. George and the Dragon that we lose an opportunity if we introduce to children only one version. Boys 9 years in mental age may begin with and will enjoy the traditional form. Reprints of Carpaccio's three pictures, faithful in every detail, would be an inspiration.

### *The Traditional Version*

*The Red-Cross Knight really lived and suffered martyrdom at Lydda, in Palestine, in A.D. 300. He is revered as the soldier-saint who fights to rescue the distressed. He is the Christian Perseus.*

In the Western form of the story the dragon had terrified and driven back armed hosts many times; he now drew nearer to the city walls, killing hundreds by his poisonous breath. To keep him at a distance, the king ordered that two sheep should be given him every day; when there were no sheep left, the citizens drew lots to decide which of the people should be thrown to the monster. One day the lot fell on the Princess. The helpless King had to see his daughter go to this terrible death; she went willingly but in tears. St. George passed and asked if he could help her. She told him about the dragon and begged him to save himself, but he said: "Fear nothing! in the name of Jesus Christ I will save you!"

St. George, putting his trust in God, lifted his lance high, and with one thrust transfixed the monster. He then told the Princess to pass her girdle round the dragon and lead him within the city walls. The people screamed and hid themselves in terror, but St. George called to them to fear nothing, for the Lord had sent him to deliver them. Twenty thousand men and thousands of women were baptized.

### *St. George and the Dragon: Lessons for Group C*

St. George may be the subject of inspiring lessons for 11-year-olds, especially boys. Spenser's story of his fight with the dragon provides the enthusiastic teacher with splendid material for a story, and bright children of 11 have been found to respond to the beauty of the actual text of Spenser.

23rd April is St. George's day. St. George is

our patron saint. "In 1350, the celebrated order was instituted."

There are, of course, many thrilling stories of the saint. Gould in his *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages* gives as many as we need. "The Crusades," he says, "gave an impetus to the worship of our patron."

One of the best-known stories is the appearance of the saint in answer to the prayer of Richard the Lion-Hearted, the king-hero of *Leahoc* and *The Talisman*. Richard and his army were in great danger during one of the battles in the Holy Land. He prayed aloud to St. George; and the soldier saint, a knight in dazzling armour on a white horse, appeared before the Crusaders. Thus inspired, they made extraordinary efforts and won the day.

Spenser makes his Saint George devote himself to the pursuit of holiness. Una is beauty, truth, and wisdom, at one with holiness, and yet Saint George does not recognize Una, though she rides beside him day by day. To him, she is veiled. It is the Mount of *Contemplation* that develops his vision so that he no longer thinks Cleopolis the embodiment of perfection.



FIG. 18

*St. George and The Dragon*

### 3. *The Leap of Roushan Beg on Kyrat his Steed*

Most children of 10-11 years old respond to Longfellow's fine record of the intelligence of horses.

The poem opens--

*Mounted on Kyrat strong and fleet,  
His chest-nut steed with four white feet,  
Roushan Beg called Kurroglou,  
Son of the road and bandit chief,  
Seeking refuge and relief,  
Up the mountain pathway flew.*

Note the emphasis given by rhyme. It is Kurroglou who *flew* up the mountain pathway; it is the *chief* who seeks *relief*. Certain ideas, then, are *linked by rhymes*.

The soft vowelling in line 3 and other lines is remarkable. Just enough detail is given to enable us to be clear about Roushan Beg and his fleet steed.

There is nothing to explain.

But why is Kurroglou the bandit chief "seeking refuge up the mountain pathway"? Our curiosity is stirred.

*Such was Kyrat's wondrous speed,  
Never yet could any steed  
Reach the dust cloud in his course.  
More than maiden, more than wife,  
More than gold, and next to life,  
Roushan the robber loved his horse.*

We are not told immediately; the speed of Kyrat is again emphasized, and the bandit's great love for his horse described in wonderful softly flowing verse, made still more melodious by alliteration. The rhyme sounds ring out, their notes making the design clear, unmistakable.

There are no difficulties in the text. We are still wondering why the bandit chief is seeking refuge.

*In the land that lies beyond  
Erzeroum and Trebizond,  
Garden girt his fortress stood,  
Plundered Khan or caravan  
Journeying north from Kurdistan,  
Gave him wealth and wine and food.*

The accent of actuality is here and we are

not deceived. This bandit chief did live "beyond Erzeroum" as here described, and the incident in the following verses is believed to be *true*.

Note the music of the proper names. Matthew Arnold uses the Eastern *names* as musically, but "in the grand manner." So, too, Milton.

Visualize the garden-surrounded fortress; think of Kubla Khan's gardens. Picture the caravanserai, rich merchants travelling in a body from Kurdistan. These, no meaner folk, are the victims of the chief.

See how the words that bear beats lend themselves to emphasis: "Plundered Khan or càra-vàn."

Roll them out musically, spaciously, softly, with confidence, as you read.

The next verse continues to describe for half its course the past prosperity of Roushan Beg; the latter half recalls and amplifies the first picture of the bandit chief, seeking refuge up the mountain pathway. The poet has used *contrast* to convey a fact,

Once      Séven hundred and fourscore  
Mén at arms his livery wore,  
Did his bidding night and day.

The voice conveys the contrast by dropping a full tone:

*Now through regions all unknown,  
He was wandering, lost, alone,  
Seeking without guide his way*

Stress "hè" as the rhythm requires.

Roushan is hard pressed by Reyhan the Arab of Orfah and his cavalry. Roushan has no choice; the enemy have hemmed him in.

Up through the one open way, the mountain path, he gallops. But the open way is no way, for

*Suddenly the pathway ends,  
Sheer the precipice descends,  
Loud the torrent roars unseen;  
Thirty feet from side to side  
Yawns the chasm; on air must ride  
He who crosses this ravine.*

A chasm of thirty feet!

What an incident! Fear grips us. There is no hope for Roushan Beg. See, Reyhan and his hundred men are there in the glen at the foot of the precipice! Roushan is in the trap the

cavalry set for him. He must die or yield. How they shout their triumph: Lá il Alláh-Al—láh . . . láh! The glen rings with the cruel sound.

What does Roushan do?

*Gently Roushan Beg caressed  
Kyrat's forehead, neck and breast ;  
Kissed him upon both his eyes ;  
Sang to him in his wild way,  
As upon the topmost spray  
Sings a bird before it flies.*

*Soft thy skin as silken skein,  
Soft as woman's hair thy mane,  
Tender are thine eyes and true ;  
All thy hoofs like ivory shine,  
Polished bright ; O, life of mine,  
Leap, and rescue Kyrrogloou !*

Through two full stanzas we are kept in suspense, but enchanted, while he explains to the wonderful steed that his life is in danger.

We are in the grip of a new emotion; not fear, not suspense, but hope. Roushan seems to

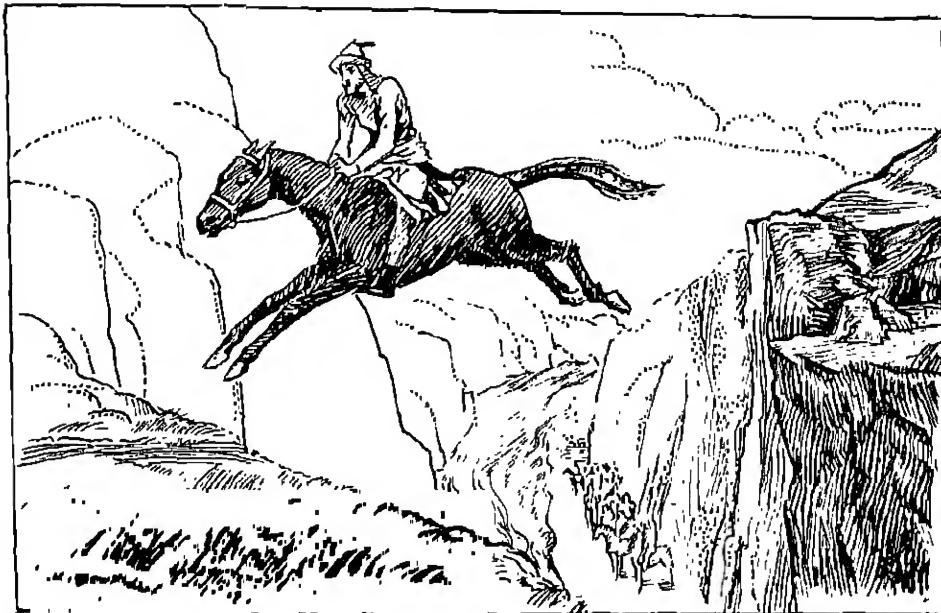


FIG. 10

*"Kyrat safe his Rider bore"*

In such a situation, with so little time to act, Roushan the fugitive can control himself enough to sing in his softest and most caressing tones to his horse. There was never such a wooing—

*O my Kyrat, O my steed,  
Round and slender as a reed,  
Carry me this peril through !  
Satin housings shall be thine,  
Shoes of gold, O Kyrat mine,  
O thou soul of Kyrrogloou !*

know that Kyrat could leap if he understood his need.

It is his confident appeal that brings about the change in us; for, of course, we are on his side.

*Kyrat then, the strong and fleet,  
Drew together his four white feet,  
Paused a moment on the verge,  
Measured with his eye the space,  
And into the air's embrace  
Leaped, as leaps the ocean surge.*

*As the ocean surge o'er silt and sand  
Bears a swimmer safe to land,  
Kyrat safe his rider bore ;  
Rattling down the deep abyss  
Fragments of the precipice  
Rolled like pebbles on a shore.*

*Roushan's tasselled cap of red  
Trembled not upon his head,  
Careless sat he and upright ;  
Neither hand nor bridle shook,  
Nor his head he turned to look,  
As he galloped out of sight.*

*Flash of harness in the air  
Seen a moment like the glare  
Of a sword drawn from its sheath ;  
Thus the phantom horseman passed,  
And the shadow that he cast  
Leaped the cataract underneath.*

*Reyhan the Arab held his breath  
While this vision of life and death  
Passed above him. "Allahu!"  
Cried he. "In all Kurdistan  
Lives there not so brave a man  
As this Robber Kurroglo!"*

Kyrat has cleared the precipice thirty feet wide. We gasp in admiration of horse and rider as they gallop out of sight.

A wonderful poem with a series of moving pictures. It is quoted only in part here.

The two verses in which Roushan caresses his steed should be memorized as a standard in the use of sounds. Rhythm and melody are beautiful. Horses do indeed respond to the human voice; it is marvellous how much they understand.

[Importance of Roushan's fearlessness.]

But every rider knows that Roushan Beg's absolute fearlessness was communicated to the horse. Horses are most sensitive animals; they know better than the man himself when he is secretly afraid.

Then again, Roushan Beg, we are sure, instinctively placed Kyrat at the most advantageous spot for the leap. Lastly, Roushan Beg's hands and wrists did the right thing at the right moment.

We have in this poem superb horsemanship and phenomenal courage.

The teacher must discuss the actual leap. Show what it means to jump 30 ft. How far can the boys jump? Find out what they know about hurdles. Tell them of the Grand National at Liverpool in March: of the fences at Aintree, Becher's Brook, and Valentine's Brook. The water jump is not less than 12 ft. wide, and it is guarded by a hedge of 3 ft. Our record long jump is about 16 ft. wide.



## PROSE STORIES

*"Our most diligent pupil learns not so much as the earnest teacher."*—GEORGE MEREDITH.

**R**HYTHM, dramatization, story—these are the essentials for children of seven to eleven. In rhythm and dramatization the children play an active part; the stage is theirs. But children ten years old seldom read well enough to reach the idea or picture behind the wall of unfamiliar words; they are, therefore, imprisoned in their environment, unless the story-teller opens the gates and leads them through some of the tracts of the golden world of story. Only the story can give them impressions of distant lands and peoples; present to their immature minds adventures, emotions, and thoughts that they can delight in and understand. Through the story, children gain experience, without which they cannot develop imagination or personality. While the child is struggling to get past the word-by-word effort to the point where he is able to assimilate what he reads, it is the teacher who holds the stage, and she has many parts to play.

Stories should be told in the earliest days of the child's school career; and they should be different in kind, some developing imagination, others connected with the external world around him, and encouraging observation. A large variety enables the teacher to open more avenues, to deepen newly-made impressions, and so widen the child's horizon; it enables her, too, to appeal to children of different temperaments, or of different mental ages, who, by necessity, have been grouped together.

### *The Teacher's Choice*

Many different types as well as many stories which obviously belong to the same group are suggested here. They come under the heads: Nature Myths, Greek Mythology, Northern Mythology, Fantasy, Fables, Animal Stories, Romance and Adventure, Bible Stories, and imaginative stories distinctly modern in tone. But in any story that she proposes to take with her class, the wise teacher looks for vivid actions that follow one another rapidly. She is preju-

diced against the story with long digressions and explanations, even against descriptions. She knows that only brevity and conciseness will serve her purpose. Indeed, for the transition classes, the teacher should look for stories suggesting movements, and calling for imitation. She should sacrifice what somebody thought, wondered, regretted, etc., and keep firm hold on what can be seen, what was done, what was said—in short, all that can be gathered by the senses. If the actions are such as will suggest dramatic performance, she should fall upon them with thankfulness.

For older classes, she looks for a good plot. The hero, man or woman, boy or girl, must be up against things for a time; there must be a *crisis* which tests his or her quality; but even here, it is the sequence of actions that counts, for actions must be on an ascending scale: each should take the reader further on the way to the climax.

If the teacher finds a story with an unexpected turn, she should remember what a powerful factor the element of surprise is with children, and add it forthwith to her collection. Humour and all that helps to awaken laughter in her classroom are valuable aids; so are narratives with catching repetitions and song-like refrains.

The wise teacher will rarely choose a story that is not objective. The emotional record that she looks for and prizes in lyrical verse is not what she wants here. She is looking for the keen observer's reproduction of concrete things, activities outside himself, or for the inventions of a mind busy in the world of the imagination.

Whether the writer tells of success or failure, joy or sorrow, however rapidly his events move, the teacher expects to find in his story the impression of directed force and power in reserve.

The teacher looks for conciseness in expression. The author's selection of words is important; so is their arrangement into groups, where each word falls into its appointed place, and contributes to the expression of the central thought. There should be clarity of thought or vividness of picture, and always beauty of sound.

### *Preparation for the Story*

Since the story is to provide happy experience, obstacles to understanding should be cleared away in preceding lessons: e.g. before Hans Andersen's "Brave Tin Soldier," phrases like "to pay toll" and "show his passport" should be explained in a language lesson. Before "Demeter and Persephone" the teacher should show reproductions of the Parthenon frieze; she should let the class look at these masterpieces in form and grouping, perfect figures in motion.

### *Following Up the Story*

Stories should, as a rule, be *followed up*, like other, lessons in literature. The teacher depends on art and dramatization for giving the child means of self-expression; and for finding out what he knows, how he sees things, and what he finds confusing. There are few stories that cannot be dramatized. In art the teacher *selects* only those stories that are suitable for illustration by a given class. "Thumbelina" and "The Brave Tin Soldier" lend themselves to illustration; so do dragons, minotaurs, and other creatures of fancy. The beauty of the Greek forms and the difficulty of movement in the frieze idea make the story of Demeter unsuitable for illustration. But an hour with Flaxman's reproductions of the Parthenon frieze, or a visit to the Museum itself, with a guide to show the different stages of the forward movement and the return in the Parthenon procession, would be the best kind of "exercise" after the story.

As soon as the children can read well, exercises

encouraging research on simple lines should be set. As many "sources" as possible, illustrations of costumes, *A History of Everyday Things in England* (Queenell), and *A History of Everyday Things in Homeric Greece*, should be in the classroom. A list of interesting books with stories like those that have already delighted the class, and which are to be found in the nearest public library, should be put up in a conspicuous place.

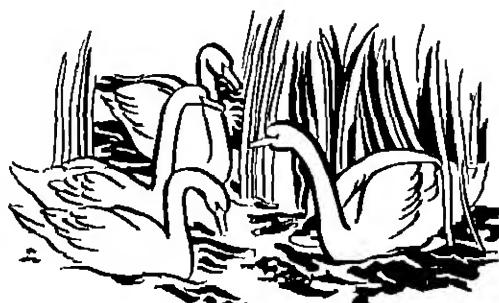
Children should be encouraged from their earliest Junior days to express themselves in original stories as well as in verse.

### *Telling the Story*

The form of the story, beauty attained by inspired treatment of the subject, should be of importance to the teacher. She must feel and convey the author's marshalling of events in convincing array; she must recognize what he means to be the chief things; she must discern his lights and shadows, and interpret them all by the modulation of her voice.

Much has been written about the manner and the voice of the would-be story-teller. Every teacher should read *A Guide to Story-Telling* (A. Burrell). All that the author says applies in a special sense to teachers of the Junior School, where a genial manner, sympathetic methods all round, and the teacher's self-control and poise matter immeasurably.

*You watch, and the story seems  
Told by their beautifulness,  
Tranquil as dreams.*



## GREEK MYTHOLOGY

1. *Amphion (Transition)*

The story of Amphion fits in very well with the attainments of a well-trained top class of Infants who have just entered the Junior School. Children who have built with bricks houses and perilous castles, who have had hours of rhythmical play, a modified form of eurythmics, and have been responding to different rhythms, know that music makes you "feel dancey." From this, it is an easy step to—"Once upon a time, wonderful to tell, music made stones feel dancey."

The story is kept short, to put no more than a fair amount of strain on the children's power of concentration. Each event, briefly narrated, should follow quickly on the preceding. The periods when nothing requiring physical action happens should be touched lightly, e.g. when the boys lived with the shepherd. The section before the gift of the lyre was made should be shortened; when the lyre is once introduced, it should be kept in the foreground. The framework of the story would be then—

The shepherd's finding of the two baby boys, Zethus and Amphion; Hermes's gift of a lyre to Amphion.

Hermes's teaching; the going out into the world with the lyre to seek their mother; the finding of the mother; the fight with Lycus and the winning of Thebes.

Lastly, the building of a wall for the defence of Thebes, by the power of music.

2. *Narcissus (Group B)*

*Teachers' Preparation.* The teacher must try first of all to see Narcissus imaginatively, for she has to convey to the children a picture of his beauty. She must be in sympathy with the character.

*Hadst thou Narcissus in thy face, to me  
Thou wouldest appear most ugly—*

thus Cleopatra uses Narcissus as the superlative of beauty. The youth was a keen hunter. Boar-spear in hand, facing the keen mountain

winds, he tracked the enemy down in the pathless forests.

*Often and often  
Snouted wild boars routing tender corn  
Angered the huntsmen.*

(*Endymion*)

Present just as much matter as will enable the children to picture Narcissus. Still, your watchword is "economy," not amplification. There are many interesting literary accounts of hunting helpful to the teacher. Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, and Keat's *Endymion* are full of hints, and are worth running through; Scott's *Lady of the Lake*, Canto I, is wonderful; you cannot miss the spirit of the chase and the beauty of forest, vale, and precipice embodied there; lastly, Masefield's *Reynard the Fox* cannot but be an inspiration.

The teacher does not, of course, read these to a Junior form; they are for her own delight and inspiration. They recall the joy in any activity out of doors; some have known the joy of a canter, others the joy of walking; but anyway, there is joy in health and strength. Narcissus had these and the added joy of skill. The evocation of this joy is the teacher's aim.

Sympathy with the aspiration of Narcissus follows naturally; certain children will feel a longing for a life like this—with a bias toward the woods or toward free activity out of doors. The sympathetic voice of the teacher enables the child to increase his store of helpful memories, establishing links of happy associations that enrich him for ever.

*Echo*

*The Teacher's Next Step* is to paint a picture of the lively nymph Echo and the effect on her of the extraordinary beauty of Narcissus. This should be done briefly.

*Subject-matter.* Echo was lovely and graceful, and had a melodious voice, but she was never silent. And now when she fell in love with Narcissus, she followed him everywhere, even to the forest, and tried to win him; but Narcissus had no thoughts of love—he cared only for sport.

The evocation of the lively chatterer is then the aim here. The voice awakens some sympathy for Echo, for all sufferers. The teacher paints Echo's grief, enough to indicate significance. The gods' decree about her voice seems irrelevant, so she omits it. But *the note* struck by Echo's tragedy warns the class of the mood of the story, the teacher's voice records the influence of pathos. In her anger and disappointment, Echo prays aloud to Venus, the goddess of love, to punish Narcissus for his disdain. Venus hears the prayer. This is a moment of high tension. We are working toward the climax.

The children are helped to see Narcissus once again, before the great change. Narcissus is hunting in the forest, enjoying movement in the open air; after the violence of the chase, he grows thirsty. He looks about the lonely scene, seeking a stream or fountain. In the distance he sees a shining pool; he hurries to it and bends down to drink.

But he does not drink, he draws back *in surprise*. This is the moment that will appeal to the children. Describe the beautiful nymph, the most beautiful face he had ever seen. Paint the beauty of the pool, but briefly.

The rising emotion of the narrative gives rise to a flood of sympathy: pity for Narcissus that he did not *know* that it was his own face, regret for the tragic mistake, longing to help him. This sympathy will find an outlet in *day dreams*, one source of creative work.

The change in Narcissus is shown by a difference in tone. Paint his surprise and perplexity, but also his perseverance and his tactics; the pathos of his vain attempts to clasp the beautiful nymph in his arms.

At this stage, everything is more intense than a year ago: we use more colourful words; the account is less matter-of-fact, less bald, less concrete; more feeling permeates the narration; we still appeal to the senses, the child's observation, but we are aware of the child's reactions now.

*The Death of Narcissus.* The children take this as a tragic happening, and they feel its pathos to the full. The narration should be simple and direct, no jarring word intruding upon its cool loveliness.

### 3. *Demeter and Persephone (Group C)*

The class must be prepared for this lesson. The teacher who sees the events of this story as a series of pictures to be presented to the child's inner eye is likely to tell it well. Pater introduces the "Homeric Hymn" (from which all the following quotations are taken) as—

The song of Demeter and her daughter Persephone, whom Aidoneus carried away by the consent of Zeus, as she played, apart from her mother, with the deep-bosomed daughters of the Ocean, gathering flowers in a meadow of soft grass.

*This is the first picture.* Persephone playing with the daughters of Ocean on the many-coloured earth; a meadow of soft grass, crocuses like fire, violets, hyacinths. The mood conveyed is that of delight in colour.

*Picture II.* "Suddenly Persephone saw a flower she had never seen before." Mood—delight, with wonder.

*Picture III.* "She bent down in wonder and admiration to gather the strange flower." A note of eagerness is conveyed by the voice.

*Picture IV. Description of the Flower.* Mood—increasing wonder. "A hundred heads of blossom grew up from the roots of it; and the sky and the earth and the salt wave of the sea were glad at the scent thereof." The strange flower was the narcissus brought on the earth for the first time to attract the flower-like girl and hold her there in wonder.

*Picture V.* An abrupt change of mood and tone occurs here. *The king of the underworld steals Persephone.*

She put out her hands to pluck the wonderful flower.

Pause . . . The undreamed-of is about to happen.

The earth opened, and the king of the underworld sprang out with his immortal horses. He seized the flower-like girl and carried her off weeping in his golden chariot.

This is a dramatic moment: the tension is high. Every word tells; the teacher has only to convey the surprise of the scene. The action should come upon the children as something extraordinary.

"She uttered a shrill cry but none heard her."

*Picture VI.* Deliver this beautiful passage appreciatively, the voice quiet and low.

Only Hecate the moon goddess, sitting in her cave, half veiled with a shining veil, thinking delicate thoughts, heard; and the Sun who watches both gods and men heard and saw, but moon and sun kept silence.

The last sentence is slow and in a very low voice.

Here a pause would be effective; the wave of narrative is at an ebb.

To continue, the voice is pitched slightly higher; the upward wave is perceptible.

Mountain and sea echoed the cry of Persephone, carried off against her will to the underworld, and her mother heard the echo. A sharp pain struck Demeter's heart as she heard that cry of distress echoed by mountain and sea.

*Picture VII. Demeter's Action.* A tragic moment.

She tore the veil from her golden hair, threw off the blue hood from her shoulders, and fled like a bird over land and sea, looking for Persephone.

(Energy, swiftness are to be conveyed.)

*Picture VIII. Demeter's Wanderings. Her increasing sorrow.*

She sought Persephone nine days up and down the earth, and would not taste of ambrosia or of nectar.

We have here the *pathos* of the fruitless search, the deep *devotion* of the mother. Reader's pace slow in sympathy.

*Picture IX. Meeting of Demeter and Hecate.*

Early on the tenth morning, Hecate, with a light in her hands, met the sorrowing mother, but Hecate had only heard Persephone's cry. It was the Sun, the watchman of the world, who told Demeter what had happened.

A beautiful moment this, and a beautiful description of the moon goddess at dawn.

*Picture X.*

Then Demeter, disguised as a poor old woman, sits under an olive tree at a well by the wayside at Eleusis. All the people of Eleusis come to draw water at this well.

A mysterious tone: Demeter has a plan.

*Picture XI. A Frieze.*

The four lovely daughters of Celeus, King of Eleusis, with their brazen pitchers, come to the well. The princesses are sorry for the sorrowing old woman with the sad, worn face.

*Picture XII. A Frieze.* The princesses hasten to their mother to ask permission to bring the sad old woman to their home.



FIG. 20

Greek Frieze

*Picture XIII. A Frieze.* The princesses return to Demeter. Their mother has bidden them hire the woman.

So holding up the folds of their robes, they sped like the young heifers leaping in the fields in spring. As they hastened along the road, their hair, in colour like the crocus, floated about their shoulders.

(Tone of voice eager, appreciative; pitch normal.)

*Picture XIV.* The princesses give their mother's message to the "old woman." A fine group. An impression of awe at their mistake, emotion at their kindliness are to be conveyed.

*Picture XV.* The princesses lead the "old woman," veiled from head to foot, her blue robe falling in folds about her feet as she walked.

*Picture XVI.* Demeter reveals herself to the mother. Baby Demophoon refuses to be comforted.

Demeter sends a famine upon earth. Iris comes to intercede for men. Demeter demands her daughter. Zeus must command the king of the underworld to restore Persephone.

The famine continues. Men pray to Zeus in their fear. Zeus is sorry for men.

*Picture XVII.* Hermes bears commands from Zeus to the king of the underworld to let his bride return to the light of day.

*Picture XVIII.* Hermes finds the king at home in his palace sitting on a couch, beside the shrinking Persephone, consumed within herself by desire for her mother.

A doubtful smile passed over the face of the King . . . he caused her to eat a morsel of sweet pomegranate . . . that she might some time return to him.

*Picture XIX.*

And Persephone rose up quickly in her great joy and ascended into the chariot . . . and Hermes took the reins in his hands and drove out . . . neither the waters of the sea . . . nor the cliffs of the shore resisting them, till at last Hermes placed Persephone before the door of the temple.

*Picture XX.* The meeting of Demeter and Persephone—

Demeter, seeing her, ran out quickly to meet her, like a Maenad coming down a mountain-side, dusky with woods.

*Picture XXI.*

So Demeter suffered the earth to yield its fruits once more, and the land was suddenly laden with leaves and flowers and waving corn.

### Parallel Work

If *Shakespeare* is taken with this class, the teacher should choose *The Tempest*, and encourage the children to dramatize the Masque of Ceres.

### 4. *The Return of Persephone*

The story here is adapted from George Meredith's *Day of the Daughter of Hades*.

Though we have used the love of earth described in the *Day of the Daughter of Hades* to throw light on the actions of Persephone and Demeter after their reunion, the real theme of Meredith's poem is the daughter of the King of Hades and Persephone, who visits earth for the first time with her mother. The day of the young goddess as imagined in Meredith's masterpiece makes yet another inspiring story to reinforce the great theme of the Demeter series: Nature.

It was dawn in Sicilian Enna. Spring flowers shone on the grass; the young vine leaves grew crisp; the wheat blades moved in lines. Demeter herself, the Great Mother, stood waiting by the lake on the very spot where the king of the underworld had whirled her beloved Persephone away to the land of shades.

The happy isle of Sicily still remembers how the majestic mother cried to the King of Heaven in vain to restore Persephone to her; and how the sorrowing mother blighted the land with her curse.

But now Demeter was waiting for her daughter, and beautiful Enna was soft and fair.

A muffled roar like the swift coming of heavy rain shook the land; thunder rolled over the plain. At one blow a black cave appeared by the rock channel at the head of the lake. Then, like the dragon-tongue of a fire beaten flat by the gale, a dark chariot, dimmed by smoke, clove the lake like a plough. Out of the chariot sprang beautiful Persephone, very tall. As mother and daughter embraced, a quivering wail fell on the air, born of bliss immeasurable.

Mother and daughter kissed, then drew apart to look at each other in the clear dawn; then they embraced anew, exultant and tearful. She who had once been smiling and flower-like was grave. With a wan smile, with eyes like

one in a trance, she seemed to see through the lake the world of shadows.

Demeter clasped Persephone. They climbed up the forest paths by green mossy roots and old mossy stones; still climbing, they touched the bud of furze, and broom, and all the shoots of prickly kind.

Leaving the forest, they hooked the vines, followed the lines of wheat, caressed the green blades; they tended the groves of grey olive, the sprays of pear blossom till they thickened. Pear, apple, almond, plum, not wintry now, pushed up warm under their touch. Corn, wine,

fruit, oil they ensured to men. At their coming, the meadows sprang crocuses, the woods asphodel, the brakes hyacinth bells; the white wind-flower lifted its head; the narcissus shed its ravishing scent.

The bees chose their flowers, the kids went sportive upon their hind legs; up in the branches the little birds sang; all about the lake were chirrups, dronings, buzzings, and bleatings.

The sun blazed. Even the rocky head of the lake over the black cave shone gold. Persephone cried "Light! Light!" and her wan eyes shone. Mother and daughter, embracing, passed.



## FANTASIES

1. *The Three Bears (Southey)*

The fantasy of "The Three Bears" is Southey's masterpiece. It is always more or less successful, even when the teacher is a poor story-teller; but the best kind of success, the children's delight and satisfaction in the best in thought and form, is attained when the teacher is faithful to the text; for "The Three Bears" is a finished thing, the perfection of simplicity, and yet a modern product. The writer reports what happened as if he saw it all. We may be sure that so accurate a recorder saw much else; but he *selects* just the few details that are necessary for us to see what happened. He limits himself, he *excludes from his record all that is not germane to it*. The three bears went walking in a wood; he knows all about what they saw there, but he is not lured into elaboration. The wood is beside the point.

There is not the slightest trace of subjectivity in this story. It tells itself—to the unbounded joy of the children. The laughter of the class has been more than once a pitfall to the inexperienced teacher. Charmed by their response to the humorous appeal, she has checked the onward march of the narrative, to repeat and elaborate the point that evidently pleased them. Children thus diverted from a well marked out path lose the thread of the story, and are released from its spell.

The teacher begins to read on the normal note of her voice. She proceeds quietly and naturally. The punctuation of this fantasy is correct; the teacher should interpret the writer's signs scrupulously; in doing so she will convey both his thought and the rhythm of his prose to her hearers.

Here, punctuation sectionizes the thought.

The reader should accept the author's ruling, and introduce no extra pauses of her own. There should be no "pouncing" by way of emphasis upon "three," "own," "one," "little," "middle," "great," "huge," and other epithets. Beginners, feeling that these words, or rather the things for which they stand, are significant, and not realizing that they are made prominent in the artist's way, seem to hit the words with their voices. The writer has done his own emphasizing: "Little, Small, Wee Bear" is the superlative of emphasis, so is "The Great, Huge Bear"; and he uses in addition the device of repetition of these distinguishing epithets whenever the actors denoted by them come upon the scene.

*The First Paragraph*

Once upon a time there were Three Bears, who lived together in a house of their own, in a wood. One of them was a Little, Small, Wee Bear; and one was a Middle-sized Bear; and the other was a Great, Huge Bear. They had each a pot for their porridge, a little pot for the Little, Small, Wee Bear, and a middle-sized pot for the Middle Bear; and a great pot for the Great, Huge Bear. And they had each a chair to sit in; a little chair for the Little, Small, Wee Bear; and a middle-sized chair for the Middle Bear; and a great chair for the Great, Huge Bear. And they had each a bed to sleep in; a little bed for the Little, Small, Wee Bear; and a middle-sized bed for the Middle Bear; and a great bed for the Great, Huge Bear.

This is the opening paragraph. The teacher—by not running up and down the scale of her voice meaninglessly; by letting the words speak for themselves; by giving out phrases and sentences, as shown by the punctuation, as mere parts of something else, the paragraph—will direct the attention of the class to a future

moment of completion; will awaken an attitude of suspense which will be partially satisfied after the last words, "for the Great, Huge Bear," have been said. The pause here should leave the class in no doubt that they have arrived at a *bona fide* stopping place.

### *The Second Paragraph*

The teacher should begin this section in *matter-of-fact tones*. Is there not a proverb about cooling your porridge? So read this everyday happening of ours as if it were really an everyday happening of bears. The author has written it so.

One day, after they had made the porridge for their breakfast, and poured it into their porridge pots, they walked out into the wood while their porridge was cooling, that they might not burn their mouths, by beginning too soon to eat it. And while they were walking a little old woman came to the house.

With *the following statement* comes a deliberate change of tone, well justified; for the note of comment, of speculation, brief but undoubtedly present, is introduced: "She could not have been a good, honest old woman."

Following the guidance of the artist, the teacher, herself an artist, now becomes dramatic. She senses the actions of the old woman. With a slight raising and bending back of the whole



FIG. 21  
*The Flight of the Little Old Woman*

head she looks in at that window; with shoulders rounded, head bent down, "she peeps in at the keyhole"; seeing nobody in the house, she draws her body upright, and then jerks herself slightly up from the waist, as she puts her right hand to the latch . . . So the faint but *suggestive imitation* goes quietly on, until the "impudent, bad, old woman set about helping herself" before the class.

Here the *paragraph comes to an end*—at a most interesting point. The children are on the tiptoe of expectation. An inexperienced teacher would race on. But no! The paragraph has come to an end by internal law. A time for relaxation is necessary; after it the children will be ready to pull themselves together for the next period of tension. They *need* this breathing space when the paragraph has been rightly delivered.

### *The Discovery*

When the teacher gets to the discovery scene she is rewarded by the concentration of the class. At "SOMEBODY HAS BEEN AT MY PORRIDGE," which is printed in capitals, to convey the great rough, gruff voice, the teacher grows realistic; the voice of the Middle Bear is less alarming as the artist directs; The Little, Small, Wee Bear speaks with point in his little, small, wee voice. Is he not the most important person, as it turns out?

The teacher returns to the normal quiet tone with which she began the story whenever she comes to plain narrative.

When she says, after the discovery of the chair: "Then the Three Bears thought it necessary that they should make further search; so they went upstairs into their bed-chamber. Now the little old woman had pulled the pillow of the Great, Huge Bear out of its place . . ." the *class generally call out*—

"Somebody has been lying in my bed!" The teacher has to warn the class, by holding up her hand or some other sign, that they cannot deduce the wording of the Wee Bear's section—

And when the Little, Small, Wee Bear, came to look at his bed, there was the bolster in its place; and the pillow in its place upon the bolster, and upon the pillow was the old woman's ugly dirty head—which was not in its place, for she had no business there.

When the last words of a story composed like this are read appreciatively, the immediate effects are visible; but there are others. Only time can show the unguessed effect of the presentation to the child of a work imaginative in matter, demanding an effort of its imaginative power, and perfect in form.

### *2. The Brave Tin Soldier*

*Preparation.* In the constructional English lesson, or the word-in-context study, obstacles to understanding should always be cleared away *before the story is told or read*.

It is absolutely necessary that the teacher should spend a whole lesson on the following—

1. "Without losing her balance," "balancing yourself on one leg," "shouldered his musket." Use other contexts that the story may not lose any of its freshness, e.g. "Can you walk on a plank 5 in. wide without *losing your balance*?" Demonstrate the meaning of the phrase.

2. Explain that the old musket is succeeded by the modern rifle, the infantry gun. Let the class do the action described.

3. Get a sample of tinsel, (a) "thin net with thin plates of metal all over"; (b) "silk or wool interwoven with gold or silver thread"; or (c) cheap copper thread used to get a sparkling effect.

4. Recall the uniform of a policeman, of a sailor, a nurse—a dress of the same kind, and of the same general appearance as worn by all members of the same body. Oppose the idea to ordinary civil dress.

5. Explain that toll is a tax paid for a supposed privilege, for the use of something; a toll used to be levied or extracted for passage over bridges, ferries, etc.

6. Explain, similarly *in contexts*: gauze, snuff-box, paving-stones, tunnel, drain, canal, waterfall, helmet, and bayonet.

7. Explain synonyms such as *uttered* and *said*, brave *soldier* and *warrior*. Use in appropriate contexts: "cast in lead," "rattled in their cases," "gnashed their teeth," "whirled round and round, like a sylph." Show a real passport. One cannot go abroad without a passport.

8. Let *children make sentences* using these phrases appropriately.

9. Play spelling games with some of these words.

### Teacher's Preparation

The story must be resolved into its elements.  
(A) *Sequence of Events.*

1. One of five-and-twenty tin soldiers in a box had only one leg, but he stood as firmly upon that as the others on two.

2. On the same table was the prettiest of all the toys—a little dancer who lifted one leg so high that the Tin Soldier thought she, too, had only one leg.

3. He loves the dainty lady.

4. When the house went to bed the toys began their own games, but neither the Tin Soldier nor the dancing lady played. She remained on the point of one of her toes, while he stood on his one leg.

5. In the morning the Tin Soldier fell head over heels out of the third-story window where the children had put him.

6. Heavy rain fell.

7. Two little boys found him, put him in a newspaper boat, and set the boat in the gutter.

8. The boat sailed through the drain and then into a canal, where he was swallowed by a fish.

9. The fish was caught, taken to market, sold to the family from whose house the Tin Soldier had toppled down. Cook found the Tin Soldier and brought him to the room with the toys. There was the little dancer, still balancing herself on one leg.

10. One of the boys flung the Tin Soldier into the stove. He felt he was melting, but he stood firm.

11. A draught caught the dancer and drove her into the stove to the Tin Soldier. She was burnt up at once—except her tinsel rose, which was black as coal.

12. The Tin Soldier melted into a lump with the shape of a little tin heart.

The tale even thus baldly told is moving; but although these are the real events, narrated in a strikingly rapid sequence, the key is wrong; the story told by Andersen is a different thing—the life of the *Brave Tin Soldier*.

(B) *Keeping the same sequence, strike the heroic note as indicated by the great artist.*

1. All the tin soldiers "looked straight before them and shouldered their muskets." Our Tin Soldier who is to become "remarkable, stood as firm on his one leg as the others on two, looked straight before him, and shouldered his musket."

2. The Tin Soldier thought the little lady had only one leg, and yet she stood firm. "That is the wife for me," thought he. Her endurance appealed to him. She metaphorically had "shouldered her musket." ¶

3. The only two who did not stir from their places to play games were the Tin Soldier and the dancing lady. "He was just as enduring as she, and he never turned his eyes away from her."

7. When the boat turned rapidly round and round, he trembled but "remained firm, never changed countenance, looked straight before him and shouldered his musket."

8. When Rat challenged him in the drain "he held his musket tighter than ever and kept silence."

When the boat entered the canal as dangerous to him as a waterfall to us, "he stiffened himself, and no one could say he moved an eyelid."

9. Inside the fish, much darker than the drain, he dreaded the darkness but "remained unmoved and shouldered his musket."

When he found himself in the same room, and saw again the little lady "still balancing herself on one leg," he thought "she is brave and enduring, and that moved him almost to tears."

10. In the stove "he felt he was melting but he still stood firm, shouldering his musket."

12. And at last, when he melted into a lump and could no longer shoulder his musket, the constant and courageous soldier took appropriately the shape of a "Little tin heart."

Nine times in the course of this short story we hear the refrain with slight variations: "He still stood firm, shouldering his musket."

In these refrains the spirit of the story is embodied. The teacher must not miss their import. Sequence (A) is hardly worth telling when the significance of (B) is recognized. The two together make the real story.

### The Picture Element

The lesson will be alive, inspiring, if the teacher is aware that the narrative may take the form

of a series of pictures before the child's inner eye.

*Picture I.* The neat castle of cardboard, through the little windows of which one could see straight into the hall.

*Picture II.* Before the castle some little trees were placed round a little looking glass, which was to represent a clear lake. Waxen swans swam on this lake, and were mirrored in it.

*Picture III.* At the open door of the castle the pretty dancer stood with outstretched arms, one leg lifted very high; she was dressed in clear gauze with blue shining tinsel; a narrow blue ribbon over her shoulders like a scarf; in the middle of that, a shining tinsel rose as big as her whole face.

*Picture IV.* All the toys began to play (when the lights were out) at *visiting*, at war, or at giving balls. The pencil rolled about on the table, the nut-crackers threw somersaults, the canary woke up . . . but there were two still figures, the soldier and the lady, standing on one leg.

*Picture V.* As the clock struck twelve the lid flew off the snuffbox and out came a Goblin.

*Picture VI.* The Tin Soldier in the paper boat sailed down the gutter, and the boys ran beside him and clapped their hands.

*Picture VII.* The boat rocked up and down, then turned round and round, but the Tin Soldier looked straight before him.

*Picture VIII.* The boat is surrounded by bits of straw and wood. A water-rat comes out and demands a passport.

*Picture IX.* Beyond the arch at the end of the drain is a dangerous canal. The Tin Soldier is up to his neck in water; the boat is full to the very edge.

*Picture X.* The boat whirls round three or four times; the paper parts; the soldier falls into the water.

*Picture XI.* A fish swallows him; the fish is caught; cook buys the fish, cuts it open, and finds the Tin Soldier. *Cook is amazed.*

*Picture XII.* Cook runs upstairs to show her find. The Tin Soldier is in the same old room. The family gather round in wonder.

*Picture XIII.* The now colourless Tin Soldier looks at the dancer, still standing.

*Picture XIV.* The Tin Soldier is illuminated

in the fire, over him is the little dancer in flames.

The contemplation of these pictures is necessary for the teacher herself if she is to *convey them* to her listeners as she tells the story. As the pictures are as real as the sequence of events, it is possible to plan a lesson in which the children tell the teacher which picture is clearest to them, upon which one child after another proceeds to build his picture in words. The teacher then says: "Let us see how Andersen expressed it," and reads the original passage to the class after each child's effort.

### *Following Up the Story*

The children must play an active part. Their activities should at first be such as will make familiar what was remote in the past lesson. The art lesson gives the opportunity: story should, therefore, be correlated with art.

Take the series of 14 pictures into which the story falls so naturally. Of these Nos. I, II, III, V, X, XI, XIII, and XIV offer just those bases for lessons that the art specialist values for the children. She does not, however, dictate these to them. She asks them to *suggest* pictures from the story lesson for drawing or painting. If the English teacher has interpreted the story as described above, each child will suggest the thing that he saw most clearly, or that touched him most. It does not matter whether the child's suggestion is suitable; the point is that the class is *concentrating* on the *remembered story*. The child's mistake is the teacher's opportunity.

*Discussion* is the next step. The art teacher helps the class to see *why* No. IV, with all the toys, is not suitable; why the scene with the Rat in the drain and the problem of darkness is too difficult; why XII with its vagueness must be rejected. But how to treat water in the lake in II and VII, the decision as to which was the important figure in VI—the Tin Soldier or the boys—the question of proportion and the impossibility of having boys and soldier on the same small sheet of paper—all these make for growth; and while the discussion goes on the children are revising the beautiful story, dwelling with interest on what perhaps was on the way to oblivion.

### Dramatizing "*The Tin Soldier*"

The teacher asks the children to run over the persons in the story with a view to acting the parts these characters play. He asks them to begin with the most important person; if they are not agreed on the point, discussion follows. The teacher then asks: What kind of person is the Rat? or What kind of creature is the Goblin? They find answers by examining the speeches of these personages and choosing the appropriate tone from the dramatic versions given by the teacher. The boys suggest two or three candidates for the part; they then listen and judge while each interprets the character; they reject the readers who cannot assume the mood and voice required; they select those who give impersonations of the malicious Goblin and the angry Rat, gnashing his teeth at the soldier. By the time they have decided on the nature of the persons in the story—rough or gentle, brave or bullying—and have tried the competitors, the *rôles* have become familiar.

When children (a) can give on demand the sequence of events, (b) have seen the pictures of the narrative with the inner eye, (c) have discussed in the art lesson, and actually drawn or painted suitable scenes, (d) listened to the teacher and all the competitors for the various *rôles*, they not only are thoroughly familiar with the story, but, from a model characterized by "the best words in the best order," they have increased their working vocabulary. Oral composition now becomes practicable, and story-writing a normal exercise.

### 3. *Thumbelina* (8-9-Year-Olds)

It is worth while to come to grips with Hans Andersen's story before telling it. The opening paragraph is wonderful. One is *in* the story at once—

There was once a woman who wished for a very little child; but she did not know where she should procure one. So she went to an old witch and said: "I do so very much wish for a little child. Can you not tell me where I can get one?" "Oh! that could easily be managed," said the witch. "There you have a *barley-corn*; that is not of the kind which grows in the country-man's field, and which the chickens get to eat. Put that into a flower pot and you shall see what you shall see . . . ."

and so on inevitably. The landmarks of fairy-land are there, we cannot miss our way.

*Flowers.* As the story goes on, the flower world opens before us; not only tulips in a pot, but waterlilies surrounded by broad green leaves floating on the water, green shamrocks in summer woods, honey in flowers, dew on leaves.

*Animals.* The animals are "persons" in the scene. Toads with their "croak, croak, brek, kek, kex," fishes, graceful butterflies, cock-chasers, a swallow, a field-mouse, and a mole play their parts.

The teacher naturally plans her Nature study talks so that her matter travels, in its own way, along the ground thus outlined by the story. The subjects are obviously complementary; but in the literature lesson the story-teller does not fall into explanations, illustrations, and verifications.

Let it be granted, then, that the flower and animal studies are not the story, that Nature and her doings are not the writer's objective, but only part of the material he uses in moulding his work of art; then must the teacher see the importance of keeping them in their place in the story. *Neither by inappropriate emphasis nor by lyrical expansion* must she increase the proportion allotted them by the artist. He uses other familiar things: beds, mattresses, coverlets, all introduced merely as part of a little girl's needs; but he adds a single determining detail. That little girl is "only an inch long," "scarcely half a thumb's length in height," and she is beautiful. You are never to think of her abnormal smallness dissociated from her undeniably beauty. She is "one of the loveliest beings one could imagine," she is "as tender and delicate as a rose leaf"; she is as light as thistle-down. "You good pretty girl" the swallow calls her, and all Nature, except the cockchafer girls, agrees with him. Even the mole thinks her voice beautiful.

The two points, then, on which the artist wishes to focus attention are Thumbelina's smallness and her beauty. He has given us this guide; the reader has only to follow his lead.

We may take account of the *associative power* shown here in the appointment of a neat and polished walnut shell for the little maid's bed,

leaves of blue violets for her mattress, but a rose leaf for a coverlet.

During the day time Thumbelina needs more space than at sleeping time, naturally. So Andersen makes her mother provide a plate upon a table. Now, in a small shallow plate which holds only a little water, Thumbelina might be safe from drowning; but what an unadventurous life! How much more scope a large deep plate provides, with a wreath of flowers about its rim, their stalks in the water, and finally a great tulip leaf, the leaf of her own flower, floating in the middle. An adventurous world for a little creature one inch high.

Note how her height is definitely stated and conveyed. Note the other concrete details, the "occupation" of boating provided by the thoughtful mother; for the great tulip leaf was an adequate boat when two white horse-hairs were found for oars; and there was no danger of toppling off, no danger of drowning, no real skill in rowing was required.

All is done to scale, every point thought out most accurately. The determining detail that gives meaning to the whole, as we said above, is the height of one inch. This point must be "registered." The teacher's aim is that the class shall visualize the little heroine, the events hang on that.

In comparatively small space, we have all the *circumstances* that precede the action proper of the story. There is Thumbelina rowing on a tulip leaf in a plateful of water! Thumbelina, born of a tulip flower, that grew magically from a barley-corn that an old witch had given her mother. Then *unforeseen things begin to happen*; outside agents take a hand in events. The actions of the agents and the adventures of Thumbelina are one and the same point. In them the story lives and moves. It is a good story, because there is *nothing vague* about the various happenings. We can put ourselves with ease in the sufferer's place. We know very well what the writer means, the dangers are all concrete, and they follow on in *the order of time*.

The mother is kept *out of sight and out of mind*. Beasts, birds, and insects take the field. Only they really *act* until we come at the very end to the King of the Flowers.

The end of this fairy tale gives pure satis-

faction. Thumbelina is most beautiful. She was, after all, born of a flower; and after "all the dangers she had passed" it was fitting that she should be crowned Queen of Flowers.

#### 4. *The Ugly Duckling*

The teacher proposes to read or tell this story so that it shall be an illustration of "form" in literature. She does not talk about form. She presents the work of art. She tells the story, having prepared it.

*The Beginning.* The artist takes us forthwith to the country in summer time; the details of the landscape, clearly outlined, meet the eye. This opening is unlike "The Swineherd," "The Tinder Box," or even the flower-story "Thumbelina"; it recalls "The Little Sea Maid," in which the very first words show us unmistakably *where we are*—far out to sea "where the water is as blue as the petals of the most beautiful cornflower, and as clear as the purest glass." It is like "The Nightingale," too, where again we submit to a force compelling us to realize our surroundings.

These descriptions serve a purpose; they are necessary, here, to the action; they are the stage and properties without which the players could not make a single move. If we do not visualize the setting—burdock leaves, the old mansion, the surrounding deep canals—we miss half the scene.

The teacher reads, then, with consciousness of purpose. She must make her class see the scene the writer saw.

The title and the setting promise material drawn from Nature. It is an opportunity to correlate English and Nature study; but the teacher does not confuse the two subjects; the *story* precedes or follows the lesson in observation.

In telling the story the teacher does not stress the setting unduly; she is not to draw the Nature sections out of perspective, they are not the story-teller's real objective. Andersen has conceived a particular aspect of ugliness—ugliness imagined as a stage through which exceptional beauty passes. The stupidity of measuring worth by values merely external is implied. But he gives the *idea concreteness*; we follow the adventures of a sentient being, are

interested in the *dénouement*, and may neglect the meaning if we please.

Looking at the story as *something composed*, we perceive that the artist has *selected* from a mass of knowledge such material as he could order and arrange to fulfil his purpose. Our pleasure is evidence that the use made of this material is effective. He presents the things that happened in sequence, compels our attention at the crucial moment, and holds it. Every event leads somewhere, we are never afraid of being led down a lyrical cul-de-sac; every narrated point counts; and when we reach the culmination, we feel we have been *led* inevitably to it by the hand of a master.

This is what the teacher who reads this story to her class must see clearly—whither each event is tending. She must *know*, having studied the story, reduced it to skeleton form and reconstructed it, the potentiality of each deed, the relative importance of each happening. So only will her voice be truly interpretative while she reads.

### *The Skeleton of the Story*

It is a good plan to write down the skeleton of the story, calling the essential points A, E, I, O, U.

A. A duck hatches a swan's egg with her own.

E. The cygnet is grey and ugly, big and strong, very different from ducklings in general.

I. (Middle of the story.) The cygnet is bound to be an *alien* in a duckyard; he is ill-treated by his own brothers and sisters because *he is different*; even his mother wishes him away; neither peacocks nor dogs, cats nor hens approve of him.

O. The "ugly duckling" grows in strength and beauty during autumn and winter.

U. When spring comes, the whole world can see this is no ugly duckling but a swan.

### *Development of "The Ugly Duckling"*

The artist uses this skeleton material, adds to it other material carefully selected from life, and succeeds in creating an individual character, the ugly duckling. He is presented as if he were

a person, he is a thinking being, a talker, an actor, and a sufferer, with that power of inward change characteristic of human beings. It is this emergence of character that makes "The Ugly Duckling" a story suitable for older children.

Consider first the *more obvious* process of addition. The new points are named below after the *consonants*, leaving as above the *vowels* for the essential incidents.

B. The artist's introduction is *added* to his original matter. He enlarges his subject by making a new and vivid *picture* precede the actual first event indicated above. It is summer time. A duck is sitting on her nest amid some tall burdock leaves, in a wild unfrequented spot near canals that surround an old country mansion.

The next point is so natural that it hardly appears to be an addition.

C. The eggs are very long in hatching, and the mother duck is bored and tired; at length all the eggs crack *except one*, the largest; the ducklings get up and peep out.

D. The duck, though very weary, continues to sit on the large egg.

A. The first essential point given above is developed. It becomes something like this: the great egg burst at last, and a very ugly grey duckling tumbled out—a great strong creature. (The cygnet is naturally very different from ducklings—uglier, bigger, stronger.)

E. Something interesting is introduced here. The mother duck is suspicious. Can this creature be her own? She puts the ugly duckling to the test; it comes through brilliantly; it even swims better than all the ducklings, and it holds itself better.

The next point, one of the *essential incidents* (I) is *developed* in the most interesting manner.

I. The mother duck takes all her young into the world, and there seems a world conspiracy against the ugly duckling. The creature is an alien and is made to feel it; the ugly duckling's story is a tale of ever-increasing woe. The other brood in the duckyard grumble at the coming of these ducks, but attack only the ugly duckling, because they find him somehow *different*: so ugly, large, and strange. Both ducks and hens bite, peck, and tease him; the peacock, red with

passion, marches up to him, the girl who feeds the poultry kicks him, the birds in the hedges fly in terror from him, the wild ducks in the open moor snub him, the hunter's dog opens wide his jaws and glares at him. In his temporary refuge in an old woman's hut, the cat and hen *patronize him*. In desperation, he goes out into the world again.

This is a story of action if we look at the persecutors; and not of endurance only by the ugly duckling: he is not "down and out," he is still a fighter, and that is adventure.

F. A wonderful experience is evolved here. The ugly duckling sees and admires perfect beauty on the instant—

A flock of dazzling white birds with long slender necks and splendid wings. They uttered a singular cry and flew so high, so very high! . . . The ugly duckling loves these noble birds!

What an adventure! This is an act of "admiration, hope, and love."

He turned round and round in the water like a mill-wheel, strained his neck to look after them, and sent forth such a loud and strange cry that it almost frightened himself. Those noble birds! . . . He loved them as he had never before loved anything. . . . He envied them not. It would never have occurred to him to wish such beauty for himself; he would have been quite contented if the ducks in the duckyard had but endured his company.

G. But the beautiful birds pass on, and he has more to endure in the frozen pond. A peasant rescues him, but his children ill-treat him; he escapes! It is only to the bushes and the new-fallen snow, but it is an escape, and he progresses to the moor among the reeds.

O. Meanwhile the ugly duckling has been growing in strength and beauty, in spite of hardship.

H. Two beautiful moments occur here (H. and J.). It is spring time. The duckling sees the glorious birds again; he feels a strange sadness at the sight of their perfect beauty.

J. The duckling makes a great resolve. He will fly to them even though they kill him for his presumption. This is high adventure.

U. He swims to the royal creatures, bows his head low in readiness for death, but what happens?

The old swans bow before him; it is a wonderful climax.

What is most remarkable is the high tension that the writer is able to sustain after the climax. There might have been so many wrong words; one that rang false would have put an end to our "willing suspension of disbelief." But Andersen found all the right words for the grateful duckling; and neither too many nor too few.



FIG. 22  
The "Duckling" Swims up to the Swans

## FABLES

*Two Fables for 9-Year-Olds*

These are presented in dramatic form.

**THE FIR-TREE AND THE BRAMBLE**

SCENE

*A Wood*

*Fir-tree* (boasting): Are you not sorry to be nothing better than a Bramble? You are no use at all.

*Bramble* (humbly): I can bind plants to one another, and I make brakes in woods.



FIG. 23  
*The Fir and the Bramble*

*Fir-tree*: That's worse than useless, for you are rough and prickly; but carpenters could not do without me. In the building of castles, houses, even of barns, I play my part. But of what use are you?

*Bramble*: Good sir! When the woodmen come here with their axes and saws, what would you not give to be a Bramble instead of a Fir?

**A LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES****SCENE I**

*A Cornfield*

The mother has just returned from seeking food for the little ones.

*Mother*: Come, little ones, and tell me all the news. What have you heard? Have you seen the reapers?

*First Little Lark*: No, mother! But the master came to look at the state of the crop.

*Second Little Lark*: He said it was full time to call in his neighbours and get his corn reaped.

*Third*: Oh! mother! Let us move at once!

*All* (frightened): Let us move at once.

*Mother*: Oh no, my dears! There's no danger. If he trusts to his neighbours he will have to wait awhile yet for his harvest. Come and eat.

**SCENE II**

*The Cornfield, Second Day*

*Enter Mother, who has again been seeking food.*

*Mother*: What is the news to-day, little ones? Has any one been?

*First Little Lark*: Yes! the owner came and looked at the crop again; we'll have to move now.

*Second*: He said that as the sun was still hotter and the corn riper, something must be done at once.

*Third*: And as he couldn't depend on the neighbours, he would call in his relatives.

*Fourth*: He said loudly that not a moment was to be lost.

*Fifth*: He sent his son there and then to ask his uncles and cousins to come to-morrow.

*All*: Oh mother! we must go now, we must go.

*Mother*: If that be all, my children, do not be frightened, for the relatives have harvest work of their own; but take particular notice what you hear the next time, and be sure you let me know.

*First Little Lark*: There he is, mother, coming again!

*Mother*: Keep still and listen.

*(Enter Father and Son.)*

*Father*: Would your uncles not come? Would none of them promise to come?

*Son* : They said they would see when they got their own harvests in.

*Father* : The sun is so hot that the corn will fall to the ground from over-ripeness to-morrow. We may not wait for neighbours and friends any longer. Go and hire reapers at once, and we will set to work ourselves.

*Father goes, pulling off his coat; the boy runs to hire reapers.*

*Mother* : Come, children! It is time to be off indeed; for when a man takes up his business himself, instead of leaving it to others, you may be sure that he means to set to work in earnest.

*They fly off.*

### *The Oak and the Briar*

This fable is adapted from Spenser, for children aged 9-10.

An old oak tree with worm-eaten foliage and wretched boughs grew near a briar. It was once a goodly oak, "more than common tall," undisputed king of the forest, as its great trunk, giant roots, and strong branches showed; now its leaves were withered, its bark was marred with grey moss: it was old.

The briar was a braggart; it thrust itself so proudly into the air that it seemed to threaten the very firmament. Maidens were wont to gather its fair blossoms for their garlands; on it the nightingale sang his sweet song. This made the foolish briar so bold that it took upon itself to insult the good oak because he was old.

"Why do you stand there, you brutish block? You give neither fruit nor shade. Look at my fresh flowers--lily white and crimson--my bright green leaves: colours fit to deck a maiden queen. Your bulk only cumbers the ground and keeps the light from my lovely blossoms. Your mouldy moss spoils my fragrance; therefore, and on pain of my displeasure, remove yourself!"

The oak, overcome with grief and shame at being thus brow-beaten by a weed, said little in answer.

It chanced that the lord of the demesne came that way to examine his trees. As soon as the briar saw him it began to complain loudly, stirring up strife:

"Oh, my lord! hear the complaint of your vassal! I endure injustice and cruelty day by day. Unless you in your goodness put a stop to the tyranny of my enemies, I shall die of grief."

Aghast at this piteous plea, the owner stood still and bade the briar proceed with his complaint. The proud one said: "Lord of us all, did you not plant me with your own hand to be the chief rose of all your land, to adorn the spring with blossoms, and the summer with scarlet berries? This faled oak with his broken branches tyrannically hinders my work. He hides my light with his shadow, and robs me of the sweet sight of the sun. His old branches beat my tender sides until the blood springs from my wounds; my flowers fall untimely and my branches are destroyed by his canker-worms. I crave your goodness to check his rancour, control his might, and protect me from his tyranny."

The oak began to reply as best he could; but his enemy had kindled such displeasure in the good man that he would not listen, but hastened home in a rage, seized his hatchet, returned to the field, and aimed his sturdy strokes at the roots of the tree. The edge of the axe turned as if unwilling to cut the grain; the senseless iron seemed to fear and to forbear wronging holy age. But, in spite of the sacredness of the old oak, the good man struck fiercely until the steel pierced the pith and the tree fell.

The enormous weight of the old oak made the ground quake; the earth seemed to shrink.

The briar, more puffed up than ever with pride, was now left standing alone in its glory. It did not triumph long; for winter came, and the blustering north wind beat upon the unsheltered briar, the biting frost nipped its stalk, the rain beat upon it and weighed it down; and when the burden of the snow crushed it, it was trodden by cattle and became the refuse of the earth. Such was the end of the ambitious briar.

## NORSE WONDER TALES

These tales retold by Sir George Dasent (Collins) suit the teacher's needs for children of nine. *The Master Maid*, *Soria Moria Castle*, *True and Untrue*, *Taming the Shrew*, and the famous story *The Giant without a Heart* are very popular with children of this age; and no wonder, for in all of them the sequence of events is rapid, all contain an element of wonder, all suggest dramatization.

*The Master Maid* is long, but the sequence compels interest. The story is an exercise in concentration. The restless, ambitious youngest son of a king seeks adventure and finds it. The Giant whom he visits is a goatherd. Before leaving the castle he forbids the prince to enter any of the rooms besides that in which he sleeps. He gives him a different task each day. (1) To clean the stables; but, for every pitch-fork of dirt thrown out, ten come in. (2) To fetch home the horse out at grass on the hillside; but fire and flame spout from his nostrils as out of a tar barrel. (3) To go to the Trolls' country and fetch the giant's fire tax.

The prince accomplishes all these tasks with the aid of the captive princess; and then the Giant orders her to kill the prince. The young people escape by the aid of magic, and then the princess goes adventuring to win back the prince, who, by magic, has forgotten her.

Trolls and their underground wealth, and a stream-drinker, who lowers the level of the sea at three long draughts, characterize the story as Northern.

“*Soria Moria Castle*”

*Halvor* is a male Cinderella, but his adventures are different from the cinder-maiden's. He refuses to budge from the cinders, until a sailor induces him to go to sea. Then follow a strange storm, a strange coast, a strange castle, silent and empty but for a princess spinning at a wheel, in bondage to a troll. A sword, a magic ring, the injunction never to tell the names of the princesses whom he rescues, are well-known features of folk lore that delight the children. The refrains calling upon the Moon and the West Wind sweep the story on.

“*The Giant Without a Heart*”

The story should be followed up. One of the best ways of following up the telling of a story is dramatization. *The Giant Without a Heart* can be arranged in four scenes.

SCENE I. *The hall in the Giant's palace. A lovely Princess is spinning.*

ENTER BOOTS.

PRINCESS (*startled*): Who are you?

BOOTS: I am the son of a king, the youngest of seven. The Giant who owns this palace turned my six elder brothers and their brides into stone! There they stand on the steep hillside. My father is broken-hearted, so I am come to set them free.

PRINCESS: But how did you come here?

BOOTS: I met a raven on the way and shared my food with him; I threw a salmon that was suffocating on land back into the water; and I gave a starving wolf called Greylegs my poor old horse to eat. Greylegs travelled like the wind and brought me straight here. I mean to kill the Giant and free my brothers and you, beautiful Princess.

PRINCESS (*shaking her head sadly*):

No one can slay the Giant who lives here, for he has no heart in his body.

BOOTS: Even if that is true I must do my utmost to free my brothers and you, Princess.

PRINCESS: If you are determined to try, perhaps we can make a plan; but here comes the Giant. Quick! creep under the sofa, and listen to what he says. Mind you lie as still as a mouse while he is present.

(BOOTS *creeps under sofa*.)

GIANT (*entering*): Ha! Ha! My eyes and limbs! I smell a man!

PRINCESS: Yes, a magpie flew by with a man's bone in its bill and let it fall down the chimney.

GIANT: Ha! if I caught that magpie! I am tired! My eyes and limbs! If I caught that magpie!

GIANT *throws himself on ground to rest*.

PRINCESS: There is something I should like to ask you, if only I dared.

GIANT: Well, what is it?

PRINCESS: I should so like to know where you keep your heart.

GIANT: Since you are so inquisitive, it is under the doorstep, and since you will chatter I will go up to bed. (*Exit GIANT.*)

BOOTS (*creeping out*):

Oh ho! we shall see if we can't find that heart.

PRINCESS *puts her fingers on her lips and whispers*: We must wait until he goes off in the morning to the wood. Go back under the sofa. Good night!

BOOTS: Good night, beautiful Princess.

*End of Scene.*

SCENE II. *Entrance Hall and Doorstep.*

GIANT *has already gone*. BOOTS and the PRINCESS *are busy looking for his heart*.

BOOTS: He did say under the doorstep. I heard him distinctly.

PRINCESS: He has baulked us this time, but never mind we will try him once more. I am going to pick some flowers.

BOOTS: And I will replace the doorstep as it was.

(PRINCESS *goes out*, BOOTS *arranges step*.)

PRINCESS *rushes in*: Under the sofa. He is coming.

PRINCESS *strews flowers over the step then sits down and spins*.

*Enter GIANT (from the doorstep he asks):* Who strewed flowers over the doorstep?

PRINCESS: Why, I, of course!

GIANT: And pray what is the meaning of this?

PRINCESS: Ah! I am so fond of you that I had to strew them about, when I knew that your heart lay beneath.

GIANT: You are very kind, but as it happens you are mistaken, for it does not lie there.

PRINCESS: Oh! but do tell me where you keep your heart. I am most anxious to know.

GIANT: Well, if I must tell you, it lies in the cupboard yonder! and as you will chatter I am going off to bed!

BOOTS *creeps out*: Shall we search the cupboard, Princess?

PRINCESS (*putting her finger on her lip*): Creep back under the sofa! We must wait until he

goes off in the morning to the wood. Good night.

BOOTS: Good night, beautiful Princess.

*End of Scene.*

SCENE III. *Same as SCENES I AND II, with a cupboard.*

GIANT *has already gone to the wood*. BOOTS and the PRINCESS *are busy looking for his heart*.

BOOTS: He said it lay in the cupboard. I heard him distinctly.

PRINCESS: There is no heart here. He has baulked us this time, but never mind, we will try him once more. I am going to pick some flowers.

(PRINCESS *goes out*; BOOTS *sets the disordered cupboard to rights*. PRINCESS *returns and hangs garlands on the cupboard doors*.)

*Heavy footsteps heard in the distance.*)

BOOTS: Is that the Giant?

PRINCESS: Under the sofa—quick. He is coming.

*Enter GIANT. On the doorstep he hails.*

GIANT: Who hung garlands over the cupboard?

PRINCESS: Why, I, of course!

GIANT: And pray what is the meaning of this nonsense?

PRINCESS: Why, how could I help doing it, when I knew your heart lay there?

GIANT *enters and throws himself down to rest*.

GIANT: How can you be so silly as to believe any such thing?

PRINCESS: Naturally I believe it, when you say it.

GIANT: Then you are a goose, for where my heart is, you will never come.

PRINCESS: All the same it would give me great pleasure if you would reveal where you really do keep it.

GIANT (*yielding to her blandishments*): Far away, on a lake, there is an island; on that island stands a church; in the church is a well; on the well swims a duck; in the duck's nest lies an egg, and in that egg my heart is enclosed.

PRINCESS: You are right. Where your heart is, I could never come.

GIANT: Well as you will chatter I am going off to bed.

(BOOTS *creeps out from under the sofa*.)

BOOTS (*with determination*) : Now I must set off. If only I could find out the way! Good-bye, beautiful Princess.

PRINCESS : Good-bye, Boots!

*End of Scene.*

SCENE IV. *As before.*

BOOTS *returns with the egg that contains the Giant's heart. He shows it to the Princess.*

PRINCESS : Oh Boots! Is that really the egg with the Giant's heart? How did you get it?

BOOTS : Greylegs, good friend, carried me on his back to the church, but it was closed; the Raven brought me down the keys, which hung too high for me, on the well the giant's duck was swimming, and I saw it throw its egg into the water; I summoned the salmon and he fetched up the egg from the bottom of the well, and that's how I got it, so now we have the Giant's heart.

VOICE *from outside* : Squeeze the egg!

PRINCESS (*alarmed*) : Who is that?

BOOTS : My friend Greylegs! He always gives good advice.

(BOOTS *squeezes the egg and the Giant screams piteously.*)

GREYLEGS' VOICE *from outside* : Will you restore to life his six brothers and their brides whom you turned to stone?

GIANT : Yes, yes. It is done!

GREYLEGS' VOICE *outside* : Now squeeze the egg in two, and the Giant, who is on the hillside, will fly into splinters.

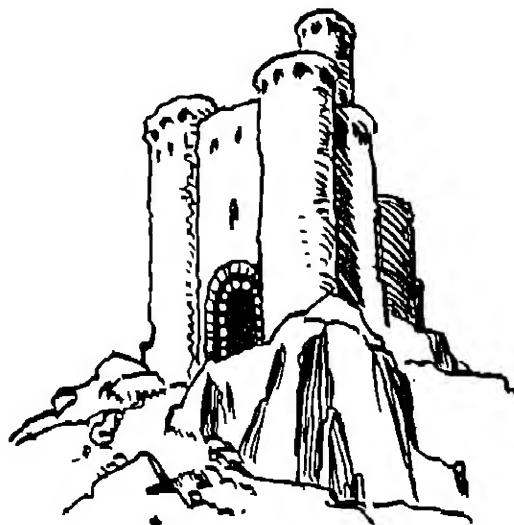
(BOOTS *squeezes the egg and a noise of flying into splinters is heard in the distance.*)

BOOTS (*joyfully*) : And that's the end of the Giant.

PRINCESS (*clapping her hands*) : And that's the end of the Giant.

BOOTS : Come, beautiful Princess! Greylegs will take us both to the steep hillside, where we shall find my brothers and their brides: then we will all go together to the king my father. Come.

*Finis.*



## NORTHERN MYTHOLOGY

These stories are suitable for children from 10-11.

Books recommended for the teacher—

*The Heroes of Asgard* (Keary).

Grimm's Teutonic Mythology in 4 vols.

*Ancient Scandinavian Religion* (Craigie).

Wagner's *Asgard and the Gods* (Routledge).

*Northern Mythology* (Harrap).

Morris's *Journals of Travels in Iceland*.

Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*. Lecture I.

*Balder Dead*, M. Arnold.

*Polar Expeditions*, Bruce.

Nansen's *Farthest North*.

*On the Roof of the World*, G. D. Roberts.

Boys and girls of the top classes in the Junior School are beginning to have some idea of time, and to most of them the heroic ideal appeals. They will enjoy the Northern mythological stories.

It is advisable for the teacher to select and work up straightforward themes like those suggested below: to trace and concentrate upon the idea underlying the personification. A group of short stories should illustrate the attributes of each divinity.

The subject cannot be better introduced than by a word from Carlyle—

I think Scandinavian Paganism to us here, is more interesting than any other. It is, for one thing, the latest; it continued in these regions of Europe till the eleventh century: eight hundred years ago the Norwegians were still worshippers of Odin. It is interesting also as the creed of our fathers, the men whose blood still runs in our veins, whom doubtless we still resemble in so many ways.—*Heroes and Hero Worship*.

## Suggested Themes

1. Following the lines indicated by Carlyle, the teacher should proceed from the known to the unknown, and begin by focusing attention on the names of our days of the week and their connection with the Northern divinities. Introductory stories of Tyr the God of War, Odin the supreme God, Thor the God of Thunder, and Frigg, mother of the Gods and wife of Odin, would lead in turn to the origin of the following—

Tuesday is Tys daeg, the day of Tyr.

Wednesday is Wodnes daeg, day of Woden or Odin.

Thursday is Dures daeg, the day of Thor.

Friday is Frige-daeg, Frigg's day.

2. The story of the creation of the universe; the kernel of keen observation; Ginnungagap and Ragarok.

3. What the Northmen thought of Nature.

4. What Odin did; what the Northmen admired in Odin; what they meant by the term hero.

5. What sort of thing did Thor do? What the Northmen admired in Thor. Humorous incidents. The difference between Thor and Odin.

6. What mighty Frey did. What they admired in him.

7. What Balder was; what they loved in him.

8. The difference between Frigg or Frea, Queen of Heaven, and Freyja, sister of Frey.

9. What the god Tyr did that made the Northmen revere him.

10. Some idea of Loki and what they despised and condemned in him and his terrible children.

11. A clear idea of Hel and her realm in Niflheim.

12. Aegir and his wife Ran, with her net.

13. The Dwarfs and Elves under the earth.

14. Word pictures of some of the gods' palaces.

15. What is Valhalla? Link up with Question 4.

16. "The horse was a sacred animal" to the Northmen. Collect six points showing the part played by horses.

These points indicate the subject-matter of the stories to be told. The answers to these questions, or information on the points raised, lead to the heart of the matter. By limiting the lesson to fewer threads than are treated in the textbooks most accessible, the teacher makes the narrative less a covering of verbal ground, and more a matter of assimilation and opening of the child's mind.

## Nature

Thinking out Question 3, the teacher should look up Carlyle—

Nature was to the Northmen what to the Thinker and the Prophet it forever is, *prefernatural*. This green

flowery rock-built earth, the trees, the mountains, rivers, many-sounding seas; that great deep sea of azure that swims overhead; the winds sweeping through it; the black cloud fashioning itself together, now pouring out fire, now hail and rain; what is it? Ay, what? At bottom we do not yet know; we can never know at all. It is not by our superior insight that we escape the difficulty; it is by our superior levity, our inattention, our *want* of insight.—CARLYLE, *The Hero as Divinity*.

Wagner's *Asgard and the Gods* (page 55), too, is to the point—

The terrors of the long dark winter, of the dreadful snowstorms, of the wild mountain ranges with their glaciers, and of the tempestuous ocean, appeared in the imagination of the people to take the form of pernicious monsters intended to bring about the destruction of the world.

## *Odin*

The teacher must first read up Odin in the sources suggested above. When he has reconstructed the personality of the supreme god of the old Northmen, he will be able to show his class how to use the class-book intelligently. When the master sees the Northern All-father in his many-sidedness, his next step is to collect incidents in the old lays, and group them so that the god's personality is revealed *in action*.

### *Treatment of Themes Suggested Above*

*Theme 2.* The teacher tells the story of the beginnings of things. In his narrative he chooses incidents that show who Odin was; he presents him—

(a) As the destroyer of evil; to the Northmen Odin was he who defeated the "pernicious monsters who sought to bring about the ruin of the world."

(b) Odin was the creative power. The teacher arranges his matter so that Odin is revealed at the business of creation. The use the All-father made of Giant Ymir's body, the creation of Yggdrasil the Tree of Life, the shaping of man and woman out of ash and elm trees, are his themes. He shows that Odin gave beauty to men and things.

(c) Odin was the supreme power. Remembering that in the Edda Odin is the supreme God, the teacher narrates incidents showing that

supremacy, demonstrated in action, and acknowledged by the other gods.

*Theme 4. What the Northmen Admired in Odin.* The teacher wishes to show that the Northmen admired a god who was deeply interested in mortals. To drive home this point he chooses a story like Geitrod and Agnar, and its sequel "Odin at Geitrod's palace." He shows Odin sitting on his throne with the Mother of the Gods, surveying the world, hearing all that goes on among men, delighting in the beings he created. The teacher stresses the incident where Odin and Frigga saved the boys and in disguise cared for them and taught them. He tries to make the boys see the kindness of the Northmen's god, who appears among men in homely guise. For this purpose, he describes Odin's appearance when he visits Geitrod: "Odin wears a broad hat, a wide blue mantle flecked with grey, like the sky when fleecy clouds sail across it; his breeches are blue. He has a kind old face, steady grey eyes, and a tall strong figure." This is very far from being a terrifying picture; no wonder the Northmen looked on Odin as a friend.

The Northmen conceived Odin as having the gift of fore-knowledge. He shared this gift with Frigg. So great was his desire for wisdom that he gave one of his eyes to the Giant Mimir for the magic draught. "No price is too high for wisdom." The teacher makes this the central point of the story of Odin's visit to the wise Giant Mimir at Mimir's well.

The Northmen attributed to Odin the discovery of Sealdic verse. They conceived Odin as attaching such value to the divine gift of poetry that he underwent great hardship to acquire it. The teacher reveals this aspect of Odin to his class by telling the story of the Magic Mead or Odin's visit to Cunlïd, where Odin is seen doing nine men's work for the Jotun Baugi in exchange for a draught of Sutting's mead—the Draught of Inspiration. Odin escapes the angry Giant by taking the form of an eagle. The story is told vividly in *Asgard and the Gods* by Wagner.

Any stories which describe Odin's magic horse, his sword, and his ring as influencing events are valuable, because they introduce to the children important points in the Norse traditions of Odin.

The teacher tells the story of *Sigmund*, who held Odin's sword, "the best blade in the world, in trust."

The prevailing idea of Odin was a god of courage and heroism. He sends warriors to fight, blesses them before they go, and receives them in Valhalla when they fall. He even lends his wonderful spear *Gungnir* to heroes to enable them to win victories; the shooter of Odin's spear is bound to be victorious.

The story of the death of King Hakon illustrates this point perfectly. (*Asgard and the Gods*, page 69.)

A good story can be made of "Valhalla" by putting together the deaths of three different heroes, prefaced by the choosing of them by the Valkyries as the bravest of the brave, and followed by a description of their reception by Odin himself and all those warriors who had from the beginning of time fallen in battle.

### *Odin and Valhalla*

Valhalla is the reward "For valour," Odin is himself a warrior and rewards the valiant. He sends his Valkyries to choose the most heroic on the battlefield. The Valkyries, helmet clad, ride through the air, select the bravest of the fallen, and lead them to the grove of golden branched trees that surround Gladsheim, the shining palace of Odin. The heroes alight and walk under the golden boughs to Valhalla, the hall of Gladsheim; its roof is lined with shafts of spears and alight with shining shields. Soft, shining chain-mail is spread over the seats. The wolf and the eagle, emblems of Odin, give proof to the blessed heroes that they are in Valhalla. But, best of all, Odin is there to welcome them. All the gods are on their thrones. Odin has his bright spear, *Gungnir*, in his right hand; on his head his golden helmet. He smiles as he welcomes each warrior. The heroes already in Valhalla flash their weapons, empty their foaming goblets, and hail the new heroes as they enter.

### *Thor*

Stories that reveal the nature of Thor, and what the Norsemen admired in him, should be

grouped together and told to the children. Reiteration, development, and illustrations should make the personality of the Thunder God concrete.

1. Thor's visit to Geirrod, where the giantesses try to crush him against the roof.

2. Thor's duel with Hrungnir, where the giant is killed in fair fight.

3. His journey to Hymir, where he faces the terrors of the polar regions.

*Gods and Heroes of the North* (Zimmern), or *Asgard and the Gods*.

4. How Thor got back his hammer from Thrym.

### *Thrym's Lay : How Thor Got his Hammer Back*

Thor awoke one day and looked for his hammer. He groped about him but Miölnir was gone. The wrath of the Thunder God was terrible; he tossed his red locks and shook his beard.

He told Loki alone of his loss; they both went to the fair palace of the Goddess Freyja and asked her help. They said that they could get Miölnir back if Freyja would lend her wonderful feather coat. The Goddess gave her feather coat willingly. She said to Thor: "Thou shouldst have it were it of gold or silver."

Loki put on the feather coat and flew to Jötunheim, the land of the giants. Thrym, the Lord of Giants, was combing his horses' manes; he said to Loki: "How is it that thou hast come alone to Jötunheim?"

Loki answered: "It is not well with the gods. Thrym! where is Thor's hammer?"

Thrym said that he had buried it eight leagues under the earth. He would give it back if Thor brought him Freyja as his wife. There was no other way.

Loki's toil was vain, he flew back to Asgard and told Thor what the Lord of Giants had said. Thor went to the fair palace of Freyja and said to the Goddess: "Thou and I will drive to Jötunheim, Freyja. Deck thyself in bridal attire."

Freyja's wrath was terrible; her fair palace trembled, her necklace burst in her rage. "I will not drive with thee to Giant-land."

Then the gods and goddesses held a council to find a way of winning Mjölnir from the Lord of Giants, for it was Thor with his hammer that kept the giants out of Asgard. Heimdall, keeper of Bifrost, gave counsel: "Deck Thor in bridal attire; put Freyja's wonderful necklace



FIG. 24  
*Thor Driving his Chariot*

round his neck, Freyja's robe about him, Freyja's key round his waist, and hide his face with veil and wimple; then Thrym will give Thor's hammer back."

The valiant Thor would not wear Freyja's

robe and veil, until the gods in despair said that unless Thor got his hammer back, the giants would straightway come and live in Asgard. Loki, too, wore woman's weeds and drove as the bride's maid to Giant-land.

Thor harnessed his goats to his chariot; the earth flamed and the mountains were rent as Odin's son drove with Loki to Jötunheim.

Thrym, Lord of Giants, thought that the Goddess Freyja had come to be his bride. He said to the wimpled God: "I have great store of treasure and jewels, and kine, with golden horns. I lacked nought but Freyja."

Thrym watched his bride at the feast. Thor, though wimpled, ate a whole ox, eight salmon, and all the dainties that were set out; he drank three tunns of mead. Thrym said: "I have never seen maidens eat so heartily, nor drink so deeply of mead."

To this Loki cunningly replied: "Freyja ate nothing for eight nights; she longed so much for Giant-land."

Thrym now lifted the wimple to kiss his bride, but her fierce glance made him start back. He said: "Why do flames dart from Freyja's eyes? Why is her glance so fierce?"

To this Loki cunningly replied: "Freyja slept not for eight nights she longed so much for Giant-land."

Thrym now said: "Bring the hammer to the bride; put Mjölnir on her knee." As soon as the hammer was laid on his knee, Thor laughed for joy. He slew Thrym, Lord of the Giants, and his brood, and took his hammer home.

### *The Character of Thor*

A number of distinctly *humorous incidents* are associated with Thor, the god whose name survives in our Thursday. Children laugh heartily when Thor goes to Jötunland to get Giant Hymir's cauldron. He puts the giant's pot on his head and the handles reach down to his heels; Thor, when in the giant's glove, thinks himself in a room; in Jötunheim, he wrestles with the "old woman."

The children must not be misled by these humorous stories into belittling the God of Thunder. Thor was venerated by the Northmen, especially in Norway and in Iceland. It is

Thor with his hammer who "sanctifies marriage and consecrates the dead."

He comes next to Odin in rank, he is much younger than Odin; he is described as in the prime of life. *Strength* is his great characteristic, and with it the *courage* that characterizes the Northern gods. Like all the gods except Loki, he is beneficent.

He rules over cloud and rain, wars with Giant Frost until he releases the earth, and helps grain to grow. He is the God of Agriculture.

The rolling of thunder is the rumbling of Thor's waggon in the sky. Thor is lightning too. He has a red beard as becomes the God of Lightning. When he is angry the lays say that "his brows sink over his eyes, his hair takes to tossing, his beard to bristling; then he blows through that red beard, and thunder peals through the sky."

Thor is always *ready for adventure*. He attacks the giant monsters single-handed over and over again, armed only with his primitive hammer, Mjölnir. He hurls it at the enemy, and wedge-shaped stones fall from the sky as it passes; when it has struck the victim, it returns to Thor's hand. A wonderful hammer!

Thor is the peasant's friend. Though he is the God of Thunder, it is not terrorizing thunder like that of Zeus. The feats of Thor recall the labours of Hercules. Just as the revelling Hercules with his club and lion skin can be really heroic, so Thor with his hammer is always an impressive figure.

### *What the Northmen Thought of Balder*

The story of Balder is beautiful. Not to include it in the stories the teacher proposes to tell is to lose an opportunity of giving a rare experience to children. All the information the young teacher needs beyond what is given in *The Heroes of Asgard, Tales told by the Northmen*, and other school books, can be found in *Myths of the Norsemen* (Harrap).

Having studied these, the teacher who wishes to get at the very heart of her subject will turn to Matthew Arnold's *Balder Dead*, and Carlyle's *First Hero: Odin. Paganism, Scandinavian Mythology*.

### *The Story of Balder's Death*

The following notes are based on *Balder Dead*.

1. *The Northmen Worship Balder*. What attributes inspire that worship? What did the daring warriors admire in him?

Balder is in the first place light; not only light but innocence. He is Spring, blue eyed, golden-haired, radiant, gentle. As a person, the god has a radiant personality; he is benignant, kindly natured. He lives an active life of love; he smooths all strife when "Haughty spirits and high wraths are rife among the Gods . . ." He never speaks an unkind word.

*But from thy lips, O Balder, night or day,  
Heard no one ever an injurious word  
To God or Hero, but then keptest back  
The others, labouring to compose their brawls.*  
(*Balder Dead*.)

Balder the radiant is beloved. *He is the ideal of those primitive Northmen.*

2. *What Happens?* Suddenly the God of Light loses his radiance. He, the blameless, has dreams, premonitions of misfortune. His mother Frea, the resourceful wife of Odin and Queen of Heaven, sends messengers throughout the world praying all created things to take an oath never to hurt the beloved Balder. An easy oath to the Northmen who rejoiced in the gentle presence.

3. *Rejoicing in Heaven*. Sport and happy laughter of the gods.

The Northmen pictured their gods at play in Asgard. They were particularly skilled at disc-throwing. Now that Balder was immune from harm it became a new sport to treat him as a target; so they hurled axes, darts, spears, and any other dangerous weapon to hand; but none of them could touch him. Weapons, like other objects, loved Balder, and, besides, were bound by oath not to hurt him.

4. *Loki's Hostility*. Loki, having discovered that the feeble mistletoe had not sworn, transformed it into a deadly shaft, and taunted the blind god Hoder into throwing it at Balder.

### *Research for the Teacher : Loki*

Who is Loki? There are two distinct aspects of him in the lays. The older conception of him is as the God of Warmth, life giving. But "as

a spark increases and destroys, so Loki, secretive, mischievous, and destructive, was looked upon as the corrupter."

The dark, hostile powers of Nature, the Northmen figure to themselves as Jötuns, Giants, huge shaggy beings of a demonic character. Frost, Fire, Tempest, these are Jötuns; the friendly powers again, as summer heat, the Sun, are Gods. The empire of the universe is divided between these two, they dwell apart in perennial interneceal feud.—CARLYLE.

Loki has a real grievance. He had taken a monster wife from the giant brood dwelling in Jötunheim. The giantess, Angerbode, the Anguish-boding, brought forth monsters as children: Fenris the wolf, who terrorized the friendly gods until they bound him, through the agency of Tyr, in unbreakable bonds; a terrible sea serpent that soon enfolded the world; and lastly Hela, whom the gods banished to the plains of Niflheim, where she ruled the "nine unlighted realms" of the unheroic dead.

Moreover, Loki and his brood are descendants of the original giant, Ymir, all but exterminated in that early battle with Odin and his brothers.

The teacher, understanding the situation, but not explaining it to the class, continues the narrative.

### *The Death of Balder*

5. Hoder, twin brother of Balder, throws the shaft, and Balder the Beautiful falls and dies. The gods are dismayed; they grieve for Balder.

6. *Odin's Command to Cease their Wailing.* "Ye have wept enough; the hall of heaven was not made for grief. If any weep it should be I his father for this son I lose to-day, so bright and loved a God. Balder is dead. You are living. *When the day comes that we must meet our doom we shall not weep nor complain.* Neither must you weep and wail now, because another has met his doom. Live, as before, your ordinary life in Heaven."

7. *Blind Hoder seeks his mother, Frigga, Queen of Heaven.*

He found Frigga (Frea), honoured mother of the gods, sitting by the inner wall of the hall of Fensaler, her own palace. She sat—

*Upon her golden chair, with folded hands  
Revolving things to come.*

### *Teacher's Preparation*

*Thoughtful reading to get into touch with Frigga.*

Who is Frea, or Frigga, this wife of Odin, Queen of Heaven? How did the Northmen conceive her? What are her qualities? What did they honour in the Mother of the Gods? What was her status, her relation to Odin?

Frigga shares the throne of the supreme God. She alone may sit on Lidskialf. She is wise and powerful. She influences Odin in ruling the fate of men, for she, too, is keenly interested in mortals. In her wonderful palace, Fensaler, the hall of the sea, she sits spinning on a golden distaff. Her spinning wheel is "falsely" called the Belt of Orion. She has personality.

8. *Frea's Stand Against the Gods.* When Odin threatens to invade Hela's realm and rescue Balder by force, Frigga speaks in authoritative tones, though the motion is carried by all the gods.

*Odin, thou whirlwind what a threat is this!  
Thou threatenest what transcends thy might,  
even thine.  
. . . Yet even from thee thyself hath been withheld  
One thing—to undo what thou thyself hast ruled,  
. . . Of us the Gods were born.*

*But Hela unto Niflheim thou threw'st,  
And gav'st her nine unlighted worlds to rule,  
A queen, and empire over all the dead.  
That empire wilt thou now invade, light up  
Her darkness, from her grasp a subject tear?  
Try it; but I, for one, will not applaud.  
Nor do I merit, Odin, thou should'st slight  
Me and my words, though thou be first in  
Heaven,*

*For I, too, am a Goddess . . .  
. . . Of me the Gods are sprung;  
And all that is to come I know, but loch  
In mine own breast, and have to none revealed.*

*(Balder Dead.)*

There is moral force behind the stand she takes: it is not just, not right, to unsay one's word.

9. Her appeal is successful. Odin does not invade Hela's realm, and he accepts Frea's

practical advice to send messengers through the world and entreat all things to weep for Balder. These are Hela's terms, and it would be folly not to accept the chance she offers.

*She spake, and on her face let fall her veil,  
And bow'd her head, and sate with folded hands.  
(Balder Dead.)*

Fulla, chief of her maidens, and Hlin the second listened sorrowfully. Her messenger Gna, who rode swift as the wind over land and sea, stood ready to depart.

There is something that Freya places higher than getting her beloved son back. It would be *un-godlike* under the circumstances to storm Hela's realm.

And by Freya's *rightness* and fineness, Odin sees clear. He will not do wrong even to win back the beloved Balder. Freya has shown (a) what the Good may not do, (b) what wisdom and goodness bid, (c) what is truly God-like—all aspects of the same fiat.

Looked at thus, Freya's decrees are significant. This is what the Northmen thought admirable, this is what makes Freya "the honoured mother of the Gods." Such decrees could teach them—

*What they were to believe; what course they were to steer in this world; what, in this mysterious Life of theirs, they had to hope and to fear, to do and to forbear doing.*—CARLYLE.

On her hearth, the sacred fire is fed night and day by prophetesses. She is, we recall it now, the mother of Balder the Good.

The teacher, understanding all this, is able to interpret her story with right intonation and mood. She continues the narration.

### *Continuation of Narrative*

10. *Hermod Rides to Niflheim.* (The details of the ride should form a separate story.)

11. *Hela's Condition.* She answers Hermod—

*Hear how to Heaven may Balder be restored.  
Show me through all the world the signs of grief!  
Fails but one thing to grieve, here Balder stops!*

12. *The Gods ride through the world to ask all created things to weep for Balder.* Thok

(Loki in disguise) alone mocks and refuses to weep.

13. *Hermod's second ride to Hela's realm.* He would fain stay there with Balder the Good, but has to return to Heaven.

14. *Nanna, wife of Balder,* who had chosen to die rather than remain in Heaven when her



FIG. 25  
*The Very Rocks Wept for Balder.*

husband fell, stays with him in the land of mist. It is always twilight there, but the spirit of Balder prevails even in Niflheim.

### *Balder's Return*

Intelligent boys and girls will ask how it was that Balder, the finest of the gods, was not allowed to return to Heaven.

It is good to be able to tell them that he did return. The Northern poets foretold the destruction of the old order—Ragnarok. They described the great battle between gods and giants. On one side were Odin, the rest of the gods, and all the heroes of Valhalla; on the other Loki and his monster children, dark Surtur, fiery Muspel, and all the giants. The gods and heroes are shown meeting their doom as courageously as they had lived. The universe is burnt up, but a new beautiful world arises. The sons of Odin and Thor have survived; but above all Balder and his brother Hodur, who resume their gentle reign. Two children who had been asleep in a far-off wood, take their place, too, in the new happy world.

## BIBLE STORIES

1. *Story of Joseph*

The teacher would do well to memorize from the authorized version of the Bible at least *one* of the dramatic passages of this story. As time goes on, she can memorize another; and, at last, the greater part. Its perfection makes any effort worth while. It is important that the teacher should feel the beauty of the story, and appreciate the various links, for she must convey some of the original writer's joy in his subject; she must re-create the triumph of his art. The secret of her power is sympathy; her means—graded emphasis, effective pauses, change of pace and tone; as she reads she must establish his sequence of ideas, his lights and shadows. The story falls into two parts. In this plan, Chapter xxxviii of Genesis, which tells of Judah and his sons, is excluded.

It could not well be simpler. There is no complication of narrative, i.e. the events follow the order of time throughout. Every incident can be tested by the formula: And the next thing that happened was . . .

The subject-matter, in spite of the misleading chapters and verses to which we are accustomed, falls easily into perfect paragraphs, since the author, in composing his story, knew indeed what to relate and what to leave out. The thing he relates is always the next thing that happened and *every happening that he does narrate counts for something* in the development of his story.

We find every happening or incident interesting in itself; and doubly so, following the event just described. We are made to perceive the connection between one idea and the next, for each leads logically to the one that follows. Expectation keeps us on the alert, and pleasurable; we have not that unrest, that sense of jar, which zig-zag jumps inflict upon us. The story-teller should begin with the right thing, and end with the right thing, through things directly related, one to another.

*Part I : Joseph's Rise to Power*

To begin with the right thing, the teacher prepares an introduction based on Genesis

xxxii, 18, and xxxv, 10. The facts are that Jacob lived in Canaan with his many sons and daughters, rearing cattle. He loved Joseph best—and made him a coat of *many colours*. Joseph's brothers hated him because their father loved him best.

*Joseph's Dreams*

Something happens to provoke and increase this hatred. Joseph has *two* dreams. These dreams should be memorized as soon as possible by the teacher. The narrative "gets over" to the children when she looks at them.

"My sheaf stood upright, and behold, your sheaves made obeisance to my sheaf. The sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me." Joseph tactlessly describes these dreams thus to his brothers—the tactlessness of youth (xxxvii, 5-11). Joseph is young. Do not make him ponderous, but a change of tone should differentiate the dreams from the rest of the narrative.

The *effect of the dreams*. The anger of the brothers is the result. "And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words." This hatred foreshadows hostile action; indeed their passion has upon us the effect of action.

What *new action* will follow? What can the brothers do? Something to the point now happens. Their father unintentionally gives these brothers an opportunity to harm Joseph.

When they are feeding their flocks in Shechem, Jacob sends Joseph after them (xxxvii, 13), saying: "See whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks, and bring me word again."

*Joseph Becomes a Slave*

What happens now? Joseph's envious brothers seized their opportunity. In energetic speech, as telling as an act, they say to one another—

"Behold this dreamer cometh. Come now

therefore, and let us slay him and cast him into some pit, and we will say: Some evil beast hath devoured him; and we shall see what will become of his dreams."

This is a dramatic speech, and it should be rendered dramatically; the voice should be pitched lower than for the preceding narrative. Note how direct speech enlivens the story.

*Reuben's stratagem to save Joseph fails*, and the story moves on swiftly; for he is sold as a slave to the passing Ishmaelites on their way



FIG. 26

#### *Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dream*

*Note.* Joseph wears Egyptian robe and sandals, as he has long been in captivity in Egypt.

to Egypt with their camels, bearing spicery and balm and myrrh.

The purpose of the Ishmaelites is included because of its picturesque detail.

A lie now makes the story move. Jacob believed the tale the brothers told, and mourned for his son (xxxvii, 31-35).

#### *The Trials of Joseph*

He is a slave, but this proves to be a link in the chain of his glorious destiny. He is sold again; this proves later to be another link in the chain. ("The Ishmaelites sold Joseph unto

Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's and captain of the guard.")

He is imprisoned by Potiphar, still another link in the chain. "The Lord was with Joseph"; for it happened that the king's prisoners were bound in the same prison.

#### *Joseph Interprets Dreams*

Joseph interprets correctly the dreams of the king's two servants in the prison.

(N.B.—Fortunately one dream meant a return to Pharaoh's favour for the dreamer.)

"It was the king's two servants, his butler and his baker, who were in Joseph's prison. Each of them dreamed a dream; the butler's was a good dream . . ." (Chap. xl.)

It happened as Joseph had foretold. "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him."

This last sentence is full of pathos. It should be the teacher's aim to convey it in all its significance to her class.

Suspense plays an important part here.

Let the teacher reflect here on the excellence of the construction of this story.

#### *Another Dream*

Unless the correct interpretation of the dreams be significant, the story-teller has led us astray; our hope is in the chief butler, who *knows* that Joseph can interpret dreams, since both dreams, the bad and the good, came true. How is the chief butler to be made to remember Joseph? He has only one link with Joseph—dreams!

The story has taken its bent. There *must* be another dream. Pharaoh has a dream which nobody understands (Gen. xli, 1-8). State only the bald fact.

Pharaoh's butler remembers Joseph. This is a great moment. And now at last the butler remembers that Joseph can tell the meaning of dreams. So Pharaoh sends for Joseph and "they brought him hastily out of the dungeon." Pharaoh says to Joseph . . . The teacher reads the dream with a note of wonder at its strangeness, bewilderment as to its meaning.

Joseph interprets the dream (xli, 25-36)—"Behold there come seven years of great plenty

throughout the land of Egypt, and there shall arise after them seven years of famine."

### *Pharaoh's Appreciation of Joseph's Wisdom*

To the prisoner "brought hastily out of the dungeon," the king says: "Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. See I have set thee over all the land of Egypt." (Gen. xli, 40 and 41.)

This is to be read with royal dignity approaching solemnity. The teacher must read, if she has not had time to learn it, the ceremonial that follows with due appreciation of the spectacular eastern scene.

"And Pharaoh took off his signet from his hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him: Bow the knee."

### *2. David and Goliath*

*Teacher's Preparation.* The teacher should be able to sum up the moments of high tension and low tension; she should know how many "pictures" she can call to her aid. She should begin by memorizing the most appealing moments, and gradually add to these until she has half or more of the Bible narrative by heart. She will need this story throughout her teaching career; by memorizing she will have "the best words in the best order"; she will be able to take her eyes from the book; and, looking at the class to whom she hopes to impart so much, win their attention for her story.

### *Language Preparation*

*Before telling the story*, clear away difficulties. By the word-in-context method, introduce some or all of the following to the class during the previous week. Follow up your introduction in the mental arithmetic, spelling, dictation, reproduction, or "guessing games" periods.

I. *The Philistines* were a race who invaded

Palestine in ancient times. The Philistines settled in S.W. Palestine; they were the enemies of the Israelites.

2. *The Israelites* were descendants of Israel. "Israel" really means "soldier of God": *sara*, to fight; *El*, God in Hebrew.

3. Goliath was the champion of the Philistines. A *champion* is one who fights *alone* for himself or for others. One who *defends* a cause.

4. *A cubit* in length. A *cubit* is a measure equal to the length of the arm from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, varying from 18 to 22 in. (See how far short of a cubit your little arm is.)

"His forehead was almost a span in breadth." A *span*, the space from the end of a man's thumb to the end of the little finger when the fingers are extended (9 in.). Measure your own span.

How high is 6 cubits and a span? (About 9 ft. 9 in.)

Saul wore a *helmet* when he went to battle. A *helmet* is a covering of armour for the head.

He wore a *coat of mail*. *Mail* is the armour a man used to wear on his body to protect himself when he went fighting. *Mail* is formed of steel rings or steel network.

A *target* of brass is a shield.

A *shekel* is a Jewish weight, about half an ounce (av.), and a coin, about 2s. 6d. sterling. (What is the weight of 5,000 shekels? About 160 lb. av. How many stone in 160 lb.? 11 stone 6 lb.—about the weight of a big man. This in the period for mental arithmetic.)

The giant wore *greaves* on his legs. *Greaves* are parts of ancient armour which covered the shin-bones (*grève*, shin-bone).

He threw his *javelin* at the enemy— a spear meant to be hurled, thrown.

Musgrave *challenged* Deloraine to combat, i.e. called on him to settle the matter by fighting. "If I prevail over you, you shall be my servant."—If I overthrow you, get the upper hand of you, overcome you . . .

### *The Israelites and the Philistines*

This is a story about one of the wars waged against King Saul and the Israelites by the Philistines, that strange race who came in ancient times and settled in S.W. Palestine.

The teacher should learn by heart the introductory paragraph (I Sam. xvii, 1-3). In narrating the passage quoted below she looks at the children and speaks slowly, marking by

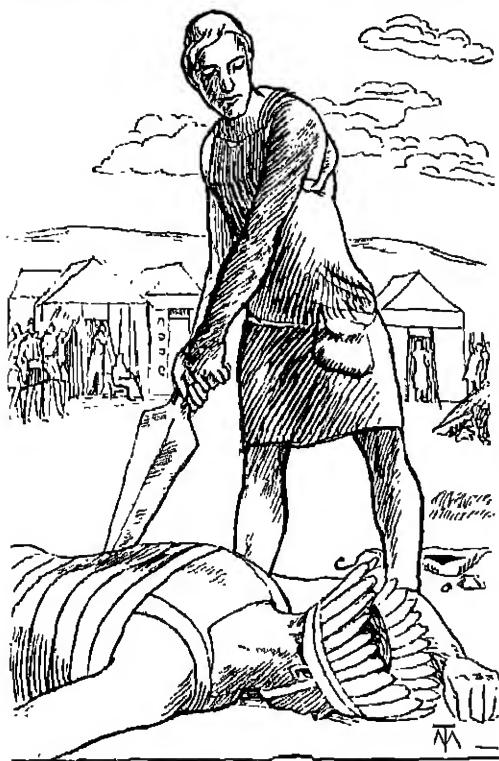


FIG. 27  
*David and Goliath*

"Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith."

*Note*—

Goliath's head-dress and sword, the sling on the ground.

stress the rhythm of the sentences (the sign / indicates a short pause)—

Now the Philistines gathered together/ their armies to battle. And Saul/ and the men of Israel/ were gathered together, and pitched/ by the vale of Elah, and set the battle/ in array against the Philistines. And the Philistines stood on a mountain/ on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain/ on the other side; and there was a valley between them.

The author has completed the first stage of the action, the first incident he selected to describe, and he has done it pictorially. Pause in your reading.

The teacher must remember that she is conveying a perfect picture: the mass of Philistines on the one height, separated by a valley from the hosts of the Israelites on another height; Saul's army pitching their tents in the vale, and preparing for battle. In the tents we know are helmets of brass, coats of mail, greaves, javelins, and spears. The Israelites are busy with these, the young pages are serving their superiors and learning to prepare for battle.

The teacher cannot put the scene before her class unless she has become interested in it, tried to *visualize* it until she sees these deadly foes clearly, in detail, on the mountain tops. The sequence of statements in the Bible is excellent, the phrasing is excellent. Keep to them and you will convey the *significance* to your class.

### *Telling the Story*

Often in the old days, instead of the two armies fighting one another, each army chose a champion to represent them, and the matter was decided by the result of the single fight. So now (*read from the Bible, lowering the pitch of the voice*)—

There went out a champion/ out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits/ and a span. And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed/ with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat/ was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass/ between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear/ was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed/ six hundred shekels of iron; and one bearing a shield/ went before him.

First masses of men on two heights; then a single individual comes forward. Another picture. Make a mental picture yourself as you go on. Think of this nine-foot giant, remember how terrifying he is; think how presently we shall see the Israelites cowering in their fear of him. Be

*afraid yourself*, as each detail brings home the invincibility of such a foe to you. Remember that you are reproducing a *terrifying* picture. As the details accumulate, awe increases.

The giant speaks. Deliver his challenge in a deep unhurried voice; avoid a staccato effect. Practise until you can render the fluidity which is so striking in this masterpiece. Reproduce the music of his opening sentence.

And Goliath stood/ and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them: (*Read the Bible words*)

"Why are ye come out to set your battle in array?  
am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? Choose  
you/ a man for you, and let him/ come down to me.  
If he be able to fight with me. . . ."

### *Teacher's Private Line of Thought*

What is the effect of this uncompromising challenge on King Saul and his Israelites? The terror of the Israelites. That is the next *thing that happens*.

With a *change of voice*, a drop of a full tone or more, and with quietude and sympathy, make the children see the terror of the Israelites. How they shrink and cower and turn tail! They lose their strength through fear. What a contrast between the many discouraged, trembling souls, and the one man on the other side firm and confident, counting on his own giant strength and heavy armour. As the Israelites grew more and more afraid, "the Philistine drew near/morning and evening, and presented himself/40 days"—pause.

Imagine the nerve strain of that terrible advance which lasted 40 days. They grew weaker and weaker in their fear. Convey the horror of the slow march, the stealthy approach of the horror. Read the passage slowly and impressively.

This is a moment of high tension for Saul and his men. The Israelites are lost unless something

extraordinary happens to save them at the last minute.

King Saul in desperation promises a reward to the man who shall kill Goliath. (This is introduced earlier here than in the actual text.) What is going to happen now?

Then young David comes, a fair, ruddy stripling, with greetings and gifts from his father, Jesse, to his brothers who are in Saul's army. A welcome picture. But the author would not have recorded David's coming unless the action was to be affected by it. David's coming is *going to count*. But how?

David comes running to the camp just as Goliath stalks forward and repeats his terrible challenge to the Israelites.

The men of Israel, sore afraid, try to urge each other by recalling the King's promise of reward to the man who should kill Goliath.

Young David is inspired. His interest is caught, he is very young and very eager. He has initiative. See how he questions the Israelites. (*Read from the Bible, conveying something of the enthusiasm of the youth*.)

The immediate effect of David's eagerness is the anger of his brothers. They rebuke him; they try to throw cold water on his high enthusiasm. Read their angry words and convey the ill-temper and jealousy so obvious in the speech. It is a moment of high tension. *Quicken your pace*; convey the passion of the scene.

David shows wonderful *self-control*. His answer is to the point:

"Is there not a cause?"

*Saul hears of David's reply*, and sends for him. David *offers himself as champion*. The teacher goes on developing the story, making the children see David the simple, brave shepherd lad and David the champion of the Israelites. The arming of David brings another picture. Then we come to his going unarmed to meet Goliath. Use the dialogue and prepare the rest of the story on the lines indicated above.

### “THE OPEN DOOR”

Stories modern in tone should be introduced to the children. Lessons on several of *The Jolly Books* would have been included here had there been space for them; for, in the top classes of the Junior School, bright boys and girls would make great progress if the teacher, noting that a certain masterpiece appealed to them, would plan lessons with the object of showing the class *what care the great artist took with the management of his material*. Hints for such lessons on Housman's *The Open Door* are given below.

#### *The Open Door*

*The Open Door* should be read and re-read. Every teacher will be struck by the rapid sequence of events, reflecting the thinking mind; the recurrence of certain phrases that well-timed reiteration drives home; the series of pictures that are not mere decoration, but a suggestive way of revealing incident after incident with visual clarity. We see what the writer saw. Every word gives the impression of his fine knowledge of its function.

Look at the second paragraph as an example of the way the writer managed his material—words are chosen and placed, sentences moulded so as to give adequate expression to the writer's conception of a lonely man. There is no allusion to his features or his dress; not a meaningless word; just the fifty years he lived alone, the way he worked, the little he earned. "Still that little was enough." The paragraph bears the impress of loneliness; it suggests desolation.

Examine another paragraph, the 14th—

For a long while he lay listening, but there was no sound, no steps outside, no opening of the door, no noise of anyone moving below; till, as he waited and nothing happened, he fell asleep, and when he woke it was morning. And then, going downstairs, he found more logs lying by the hearth and the fire embers still glowing and warm.

Language is certainly "plastic" here. What is written represents faithfully the happening; these are the sounds the old man expected to hear, and his brain registers "no steps—no opening of the door, no movement"; we see him listening intently and then relaxing as the still

silence disappointed his expectation. There is not an unnecessary word. The closing sentence links the paragraph with the preceding mystery, deepens it, and asserts its continuance in succeeding paragraphs.

#### *Punctuation*

What absurdities are committed under the name of punctuation, what illogical and meaningless instruction is given to children! Examine the signs used in this prose account.

All that time he had lived alone, working hard, a labourer upon the land, for a small weekly wage. Now that he had grown old and feeble his wage had become less, and he had little enough to live on; still it was enough; and in his small two-roomed cottage he had just the necessary things for keeping house. This he did all by himself: he had no children, no wife, no friend, and no money.

Note the correct use of comma and semicolon. Look at the colon—"This he did all by himself;" the statement is to be explained; what follows is the equivalent of "all by himself." *Punctuation* is used rightly to sectionize thought.

#### *Main Motives*

It is obvious that the writer wishes to bring home to the reader (a) the span of loneliness, (b) the locked door, (c) the miracle of the grey rabbits and little silver skin, (d) the opening of Caleb's mind. Haunting refrains and thought presented in picture make a, b, and c familiar to us; for d the artist gives us picture too, but mainly the might of thought. Caleb's development is a mental process, appealing to thinking minds. Readers are expected to follow the sequence of events, and the interesting and unforeseen thought processes of the lonely man. The refrains, used with success, are collected below.

#### *Refrains*

A. *For Fifty Years*. This phrase occurs, with slight variations, fourteen times in this short story.

"For fifty years every night of his life."

"The lonely man"; and so he had been for fifty years."

"For the first time on a week day *for fifty years*, he stayed at home."

"I've tried your door every night for the last fifty years."

"And you say that you have been to my door every night for the last fifty years?"

"Saw her? How could you? It's fifty years now."

"He brought down the cot in which, fifty years ago, the child had slept."

"It went to sleep with its old father of fifty years ago looking on."

"The rabbit skin was empty of its inhabitant now the first time for fifty years."

"Will she remember you again after fifty years?"

"To make up for lost time, perhaps she will age soon."

"Who knows? It's fifty years."

"Dreaming about me? Oh, no. . . . It's fifty years and that is a long time."

"It's only in your brain that fifty years have gone."

"'Tis more than fifty years now since Caleb died."

**B. The Locked Door.** In one form or another, this occurs more than a dozen times.

"Old Caleb had locked the door every night of his life."

"One night as he was locking the door, the thought came to him: 'Why do I go on every night locking the door?'"

He came in again, "closed the door but did not lock it."

His store of wood had begun to grow instead of diminishing "since he had left off locking his door."

When Caleb asked the intruder how he came there he replied: "You left your door open, that's how. . . . I've tried it every night for the last fifty years but it was always locked."

"Once there went out of my door something that I valued. It never came back. Ever since that I've always locked my door. I locked it because if I'd only begun locking it before, perhaps . . . ."

"That same night I came to your door, found it locked. . . . I wanted to come in and be warm, but I found the door locked."

"I saw a strange sight and a pretty . . . that night when first you locked your door."

"The little rabbit in the silver skin was still coming towards me, as I put out my hand to lift the latch. Then I found the door locked. . . . You'd lock'd the door. After that I always found it locked."

"And you say that you have been to my door every night for the last fifty years?" "Yes. It seemed a long time waiting till the door opened."

**C. The rabbit motive** that seems to permeate the story, rings out unmistakably nine times.

"I saw a lot of grey rabbits dancing in a ring."

"In the middle . . . sat a little three-year-old wrapped in a silver rabbit skin."

"Came the rabbits themselves, one silver and all the rest grey."

"The silver rabbit . . . frisked to the door. . . . And all the grey rabbits went after it."

"The rabbits came again--the silver and the grey."

"The silver rabbit ran up, came down again and went out. And all the grey rabbits went after it."

"Silver-rabbit stood and looked, while all the grey rabbits sat watching it."

"Put on her silver rabbit skin . . . and all the grey rabbits ran after her."

### Series of Pictures

The story is clearly revealed in a series of some thirty pictures, e.g.—

1. Old Caleb locking the door before going to bed.

2. Caleb, old and feeble, in his small two-roomed cottage.

3. Caleb, a picture of indecision, turns the key and unturns it again.

4. Caleb looks at his wood attentively, where it lies piled in a dark corner by the hearth.

5. Caleb lay listening.

6. There, sitting in his chair, before the fire, he saw an old man, etc. "How did you come here?"

7. "You left your door open. Unlocked is open," replied Fellow-man.

8. Caleb's search for his little daughter.

9. A lot of grey rabbits dancing in a ring, in the middle of them . . . .

10. "When she saw me she got up and came after me. Then they all came after her."

11. Fellow-man looked at him silently for a while.

12. "I am awake now!" etc.

13. Night. A waning moon. Caleb sat in the warm glow of the wood-embers, waiting with the door propped open.

14. The silver rabbit jumped across the threshold; all the grey rabbits came after.

15. Silver skin at the foot of the stairs, etc.

### The Introduction of the Theme

The story opens with an arresting picture of a lonely old man. Nothing blurs the impression of absolute loneliness of one who is not even

wedded to possessions; he has nothing. For him, there were no passers by. There could not be a lonelier man. "He had got into the way of it, nor was it likely now that he would ever get out of it."

### *Caleb's Mind Moves*

Then, by the art of the writer, the old man, who but now seemed "fixed," develops mentally. He stands out startlingly as an individual the moment we hear his unexpected self-questioning: "Why do I go on every night locking the door?" To break away from the routine of fifty years, what an effort is implied in that! The man's mental state, though unforeseen, is clear; the situation is perceptible. He leaves the door unlocked, and things happen *because the door of his mind is open too*. It is the crisis of his life.

### *A Strange Visitant*

When his stock of fuel mysteriously increases, and he finds a strange visitant in his room, with what courage he questions him! How astonished he is to learn that Fellow-man would have helped him any time these fifty years; had he not been shut out. It is an open mind that ponders the accusation of Fellow-man.

And when Fellow-man describes the strange sight he had seen fifty years before and every night since—a small three-year-old, wrapped in a silver rabbit skin, sitting in the midst of a lot of grey rabbits dancing in a ring! Say dancing, because there was such life and joy and movement in it, and it all went to time as though there was music which one could not hear.

How the old sorrow springs again! Caleb's grief of fifty years before overwhelms him now.

### *The Old Man is Adventurous*

But it is the old man's initiative, shown in the series of unprecedented actions, that astonishes the reader; greatly daring, though "his mind went so much farther than he could see," Caleb translates vision into action.

### *Dream or Truth*

One of the greatest charms of the story is the ease with which we slip into and out of dream-land. Caleb never quite settles the question whether his wonderful experiences are dream or reality, though his final word after each marvellous occurrence is—in varying degrees of certainty—"I couldn't have dreamed that."

### *"Dream is Truth"*

But the expansion of the mind of this old man after fifty years of routine is the great theme; so we witness the breaking of his bonds when he gets to the stage where "dream or truth began no longer to trouble him," and "Joy made him happy all day." And as the story marches on unflaggingly to its satisfying end, from dream to dream, this joy increases; perfect simplicity, perfect selflessness, too, characterize old Caleb.

### *Lessons on "The Open Door"*

These lessons should follow the preparation already outlined.

1. The teacher reads the beautiful story through, conveying the atmosphere to the class. If he reads with understanding, the children see pictures as the story moves on.

2. At the second reading the teacher encourages the class to take up the refrains to which attention has been directed above.

3. He discusses with the class pictures suitable for illustration in the drawing lesson. He asks what pictures they remember; they suggest subjects that they would like to draw. He shows why certain of them must be rejected; why certain others may be attempted; upon these last the teacher and class concentrate. Even if he cannot draw, he can discuss, with the help of verbal statements on the blackboard, the composition of the picture.

4. Suppose the picture chosen is that on page 14.

This time the rabbits were bolder and stayed longer; and as it went by where he sat the silver rabbit stopped, put two tiny paws upon his foot, lifted its head and looked at him.

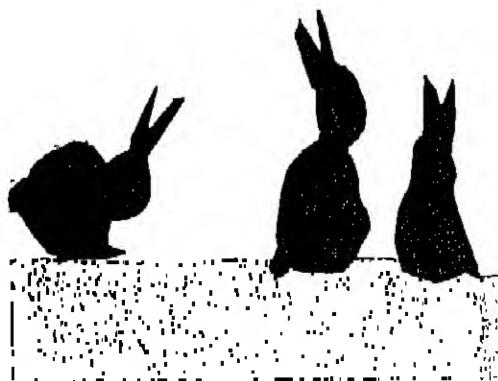
The teacher gets from the class that Caleb is sitting in a chair looking at the silver rabbit. What is the silver rabbit doing? It is touching Caleb's foot. With what? With its two tiny paws. Now what is Caleb feeling? What expression must we try to reveal in Caleb's face? Is it astonishment, joy, expectation, hope, or what other emotion? The children are concentrating on the text; they are thinking out something that is worth while.

The teacher asks them what else they would like to include in the picture. They would like to put in the grey rabbits, so he shows them just how many may be included, and how suggestive rabbits' ears at the back can be.

Another process is going on: the children are

selecting and rejecting, arranging their material, and finding words for the pictured scene. While dwelling on the scene, they have become familiar with what was once remote.

5. The last lessons should encourage the children to observe the author's management of his material, as indicated above. Show his fine use of words as a vehicle of expression; there are no meaningless epithets, no vain and sluggish repetitions of "and"; punctuation is used as a definite guide to the relative value of the various thoughts expressed; finally, the author presents his thoughts in sequence, the main thought is unmistakable, the argument clear; and we see and hear because he "has lent his mind out to help us."





## THE CHAUCER FRIEZE

### THE FRIEZE AND THE PAGEANT

LOOKING at a pageant or a frieze the children make observations and ask questions. Here is the beginning of both class discussion and a centre of interest. Pageants can be seen only occasionally, but a frieze can be studied at any appropriate time.

This method has been used successfully over and over again; it gives the teacher a sure means of holding the interest of his class. By this method he may impart to them necessary information and at the same time stimulate their imagination and set them adventuring.

The illustration must be carefully and accurately drawn, and must be large enough to be seen easily by every member of the class. Suppose the teacher's theme is the story of the saints: *the children teach themselves*; for looking on things that matter, they ask questions that are worth answering. Who is the leading figure in the picture. Why does he carry his head in his hands? They can be set to find out the whole story of St. Denis, for the picture has caught their interest. The dragon-slayer they know. Is he not our own Red-Cross Knight who really lived in the fourth century? But who is this throwing a purse of gold into that shabby room? Did he throw three such purses? Did St. Nicholas, our Santa Claus, really live then, and at about the same time as our Saint George? Who is this ninth-century figure standing in the heart of a wood? St. Swithin? Why does he look so intently at the flowers at his feet?

Why does Hugh of Lincoln wear that shabby habit when the knights around him are so splendidly dressed?

#### *The Frieze*

An inspiring series of pictures can test the children's understanding of stories like *Hiawatha*. Boys enjoy the dramatic incidents: the Ojibways and Dacotahs, Delawares, and Mohawks wildly glaring at each other; then the same tribes smoking the peace pipe; Mudjekeewis smiting with his war-club the terror of the mountains; Shawondasee, fat and lazy, gazing at the dandelion, mistaking it for a maiden of the prairie; young Nokomis falling from the full moon down upon the blossoms; old Nokomis singing a cradle song to the little Hiawatha; Lagoo making a bow for Hiawatha; Kwasind tearing the rock from its foundation; the face of Laughing Water peeping from behind the curtains; Mondamin, the maize, in his garments green and yellow.

The class learn to observe the detail in each incident, to find words to express what they see; they can be sent to the poem to check their observations, and, lastly, the teacher himself has the answer to all questions in the masterpiece. The adventures of Robin Hood, of Tom in *The Water Babies*, and of Odysseus become as familiar as everyday happenings by this happy method, which is fully illustrated here in detailed lessons on two of Chaucer's pilgrims.

*Lessons on the Squire*

**The Squire**  
 Embroidered was he, as if were a mede  
 All full of fresh flowers, white and rede,  
 Singing he was, or fluting all the day  
 He was as fresh, as is the month of May.

If the Squire is to be approached first as an adventurous youth who once lived, then the teacher begins with his feats; these—a series of actions—are followed by other things the youth can do: sing, dance, play the flute, as well as the emotions he felt. He is presented as a living, active being. An interest in his appearance is presumed; to support verbal description, taking the place of dull explanation, comes (1) the single painted portrait (Volume III Chart, coloured in class), followed by (2) the same figure as one of the feudal group, knight, squire, yeoman. This feudal group is only one of the many significant groups of the frieze. The youth can tell stories. "Would you like to hear the story that he told?"

I. In the lessons suggested below the teacher tries to interest the class in the Squire, in the first place, by his story. Hints are given below as to the manner of telling.

II. She follows the story up in some of its aspects in subsequent lessons: story, composition, reading, general knowledge. (See tree on page 178.)

III. She uses these aspects to exercise the imagination of the children.

IV. She utilizes the interest in the Squire to give an *informative* lesson, though in the *story method*, about the "school" life of little pages

and squires, say in the history period of the time-table, with this particular Squire as the centre of interest.

V. She assumes that they want to know the young story-teller, and they do. The lesson on the story-teller is given below (Lesson 3, p. 179).

### 1. *The Squire's Tale, or The Tale of the Magic Horse*

(A) At Sarai in the land of Tartary, there dwelt a king, who was rich and very powerful. The name of this king was Cambius Khan. The whole world had heard of Cambius Khan, and he deserved his fame. Although he was young, he was braver than all other lords of his time. Every one said how wise, kind, and just he was. Besides being as ambitious as any squire in his house to do brave and honourable deeds, he was always steadfast and true to his word.

(B) Cambius Khan had one lovely daughter, whose name was Canacee. I cannot tell you how beautiful she was. Words fail me. But on a day when the king, Cambius Khan, was keeping his usual birthday feast, and beautiful Canacee and her ladies, surrounded by many lords, were being delighted by the minstrels who were playing before the dais on which they sat, there came in suddenly, at the hall door, a (C) knight

riding a steed of brass. In his hand he held a broad mirror, on his thumb he wore a gold ring, by his side hung a naked sword. (E) The strange knight on the brass horse rode right up to the high table, to the amazement of the king and his lords; every one stared at him in silence. The stranger, fully armed except his head, saluted the King and Queen, and then all the lords in order, as they sat in the hall.

(C and F) He then said courteously: "My liege lord, the King of Arabia and of India, salutes you, and sends by me, in honour of your birthday, this steed of brass. In twenty-four hours he can bear you wherever you please and back again in perfect safety, in any kind of weather. If you wish to fly, he will bear you through the air, even if you fall asleep on his back; and by merely turning a pin, as the clever inventor arranged, you can make him bring you home again.

(G) "He has sent the (B) Lady Canacee, your excellent daughter, this mirror and this ring. The mirror is a magic mirror. If you look into it you will know when misfortune is about to fall on your kingdom or yourself, and discover who are your friends and who your foes. Besides this, if a knight be false in love, (B) the lady will see his double-dealing in this mirror. If the Lady Canacee will wear this wonderful ring upon her thumb, she will understand all that the birds of the air say and be able to speak their language to them.

"The naked sword hanging by my side can pierce any armour, even if it were as thick as an old oak-tree; and the wounds it makes can be healed only by the flat of this very sword."

(H and C) As soon as the knight had explained what these magic gifts were that his King had sent to Cambius Khan and his daughter, he rode on his brass horse out of the hall and then alighted. The horse, which shone like the sun, stood in the courtyard as still as a stone. Then attendants led the strange knight to his room; (J) *squires took off his armour*; and, when he sat down to refresh himself, a *squire carved his meat* and waited courteously on him.

The sword and mirror were borne in state to the high tower; and the ring was presented to Canacee, who was at table; (K) but nobody could move the horse; no machine, windlass, or

pulley could make him budge one inch. They therefore left him where he stood until the strange knight should come and give them the special knowledge required.

(L) All the people swarmed about this extraordinary horse. He was a big *horse*, as broad and as long as the *steeds* of Lombardy; he was as quick of eye as if he were an Apulian *courser*. From his tail to his ears neither Nature nor art could improve him, but he was *made of brass*, and everybody wondered how a brass horse could move. Some said that only a horse from fairy land could do such things; others murmured like a swarm of bees, and made wild guesses from the tales of old time:

(M) One said: "It is another *Pegasus*, the horse that had wings to fly"; and another, "It is like the horse of Synon the Greek, who brought Troy to destruction . . ."; another, quaking in his fear, wondered "if inside that horse are armed men who have come to take our city."

Everybody talked about the horse, the mirror, and the ring until King Cambius Khan rose from the board. (N) Before him walked the minstrels until they came to the presence chamber, where the King mounted his throne. Then the minstrels played their instruments so sweetly that it was like heaven to hear.

The knights and ladies at the feast now began to dance, and the strange knight, who was invited to the presence chamber, (O and B) danced with the King's daughter, the beautiful Canacee.

The revel and jollity, all the different expressions of the dancers, cannot be described, nor can the various dishes of the splendid supper—no, not the seasoned broths, the swans, nor the young herons. But every one knows the splendour of such a kingly feast.

(P) When supper was over the noble Cambius Khan went to see the horse of brass, and, of course, all the lords and ladies went with him. The King asked the strange knight to tell him the qualities of the horse, and the way to manage him. The knight replied (Q): "You must mount on his back, tell him where you wish to go, then twirl this pin which you see in his ear." The knight took the reins as he spoke, and immediately the brass horse began to trip and dance.

"When you arrive where you wished to go, bid him stop, then turn this other pin, and he will do exactly what you want, if the whole world tried to prevent him. When you have done with him for the time being, turn this third pin, and he will vanish from every one's sight and will come again at any hour of the day or night that you choose to call him up. That is the whole secret."

(R) When the King felt that he understood the management of the wonderful brass horse, he thanked the strange knight; then they all went on with the revels. (S) After all the feasting and dancing they began to feel very sleepy and to need repose; but it was not until nearly dawn that they all went to bed, still talking of the wonderful horse of brass. They dreamed strange things, but I will not tell you their dreams.

### Hints on the Manner of Telling based on Aspects of the Story

(A) Keen admiration for knightly qualities. Keen admiration for the wonderful Cambius Khan, who outshone all lords of his time, and shared the ambition of the keenest squires.

(B) Reverence of knights and squires for ladies, apparent whenever the beautiful Canacee is mentioned.

(C) The note of wonder at the steed of brass, and the point that it is a *knight* who rides it must be made.

(D) With a slight movement of the right hand and of the thumb the teacher locates the mirror and the ring.

(E) When the horse rides up to the table to the amazement of everybody, the pace should be hurried up, the manner enthusiastic and even excited. (See below, character of the squire.)

(F) The knight's *courtesy* is a great point. The opening of the speech must be delivered as one would imagine it done by the "verray parfit gentil knight."

(G) The pace is slow, the tone very respectful at "He has sent the Lady Canacee, your excellent daughter . . ."; but it grows hurried and even voluble as the virtues of the mirror and the ring

are described. The squire has forgotten about the stately knight and is his keen self.

(H) Here the story-teller resumes the note of wonder appropriate to the vision of magic horses, mirrors, and rings; but especially for the horse which shone like the sun.

(J) When the squires attend the strange knight, the tone is matter-of-fact, for these are the everyday duties of a squire, and it is a squire who speaks.

(K) The story-teller resumes the note of wonder as at C and H.

(L) Here we have the confident and well-informed tone of the *man who knows all about horses*, admires them, and loves them.

(M) The young man knows all about the horses of literature; either somebody has been telling him grand old stories, or he has read them for himself. The story-teller strikes the note of reminiscence. A dramatic rendering of the guesses of the people is very effective.

(N) Appreciation of minstrels and music is apparent in the tones of one who sings or plays the flute all day if he can.

(O) How much the speaker would have liked to dance with beautiful Canacee!

(P) Children enjoy details of a feast, so every detail is of importance here.

(Q) The management of the strange horse should be rendered dramatically—a little movement as of twirling the pin in the horse's ear, taking the reins, very slight movements of the teacher's body suggesting tripping and dancing, etc.

(R) At "the King understood the management of the wonderful brass horse" the story-teller must convey that they are *at the climax*. The adventures of Cambius Khan with the brass steed are to be followed up elsewhere. Now the great point is that this most powerful Khan, kind, wise, and honourable, but very ambitious, has a magic horse. What will he do with it? The children will tell you. The incomplete story is a spur to their imagination.

(S) A tone appropriate for revels and feasting in which the children are always interested.

(T) Strike the final note. As they go sleepily to bed, they still talk of the *wonderful horse* of brass—and dream . . . What did they dream?

*Hints on Manner of Telling based on  
the Character of Chaucer's  
Story-teller*

Chaucer's text can be resolved into six sections.

1. We have a picture of the youth as a squire with all that the term connotes; he has inherited qualities and traditions which make him the charming individual he is.

2. The mind is prejudiced in his favour, for we cannot help seeing him as the son of that "verray parfit gentil knight" who "never yet no vicleyne ne sayde, in al his lyf unto no maner wight."

3. He is, in addition, one who has had a more modern type of education than that of his father. He has given more time to art and accomplishments. He can compose verses and sing them, play the flute and dance. With all his strength and skill as a soldier and his accomplishments, he is humble, ready to wait on others, thinks no service beneath him. He is thoroughly alive.

4. The portrait becomes more and more concrete. The youth goes out on foreign service in the interminable wars with Flanders or with France, and *bears himself bravely*. He is inspired by a fair lady whose grace he hopes to win. He is ardent in his love and in his fighting as in everything else.

5. We can see the man of action, young, keen, able; we have details of his height, his hair, his dress; his energy, and his gentleness.

6. Such a character impresses upon us the charm of chivalry.

This is the youth that the story-teller impersonates in telling or reading the story of the magic horse.

*2. Possible Lines of Thought*

It is clear that several lessons, good material for oral work, are possible after the story lesson. The teacher has only to choose. She will doubtless be influenced by the range of ideas represented by the whole material presented to the child in its daily lessons. Reiteration of ideas—with expansion—is a sound principle.

AFTER THE TELLING OF THE STORY OF THE MAGIC HORSE

Dreams in general.	Dream horses.	Adventure. What adventures would you take on such a horse?	Kind of thing a powerful Khan did.	Cambius Khan "ambitious as a squire." What were the ambitions of a squire?	
Magic horses and other horses in literature.	Real horses	What kind of adventures would have befallen us had we lived in the days of Cambius Khan? and with such a horse?	Oriental splendour. Palaces. Jewels. Colours.	Magic mirror of Snow-white.	

Who is it that tells the story?  
We know a good deal about the young man; for he is *very* young, and himself a squire.

What the squire did when he was a little boy (like you) or of your age; what sort of things he had to learn, what splendid things his father did!

The teacher's manner of telling the story.

FIG. 28  
Various Ways of Following up  
"The Magic Horse"

3. *The Story of the Squire Himself*

This is the story of the youth who told the story of the Magic Hoise.

*Clue.* The squire had "locks crull'd as (tho' they were laid in press)." He was the son of the "verray parfit gentil knight."

Years ago a certain knight had a blue-eyed curly-headed little son who had such a happy nature that he had hardly ever been known to cry, even when he was a baby. I like to think of this happy baby boy as Hal. Hal loved his father very much and thought him a wonderful person; it was not only the child who thought the knight worthy of reverence; young squires, pages, and yeomen served him eagerly; one and all loved him, for they had never known him to say a harsh or unkind word to his equals or to his inferiors. He was a very perfect gentle knight.

When the little golden-haired boy was 8 years old, his father persuaded the child's gentle mother to let him go away to the house of a very great noble for his education. *This was the custom.* Knights thought that "Mannes make man"; and, fearing that their own discipline might not be strict enough with their children, they used to send boys as young as eight into the households of great nobles, and even to the Court, to be trained to undergo hardship, to learn manners, courtesy, and all that chivalry meant.

So Hal, struggling hard to keep back tears, said good-bye one bright May morning to his father and mother, and set out on horseback, in the care of the chaplain, for the castle of the great noble who had agreed to train him with other boys of noble birth. The castle was not only Hal's new home; it was his school. What sort of things did a little boy like Hal have to learn? Well, he did learn a certain amount of the things all boys and girls learn now; that is, the chaplain of the household taught Hal and the other boys reading and writing; but he taught them, besides, Latin, French, and Heraldry; and he made them study diligently all the brave deeds done by knights in history.

*Clue.* *He was lowly and serviceable  
And carf bifor his fader at the table.*

Hal's training had other aspects; for all these little boys were pages, and a page in those days had to know definite things and know them thoroughly. Hal, when doing duty as a page, had to learn how to lay the table, where to put the knife and the salt, the spoon, and the napkin. He had to learn to cut loaves in a special way. He carried ewers and napkins for the guests to wash their hands before a feast, and as he grew older *he learned to carve.* He learned *how to behave* by watching the manners of the courteous guests he served. Hal learned that the great thing was to do whatever you did well.

*Clue.* *He could songs make and well endite,  
Joust and eek dance, and well portray  
and write.*

There was yet another side to this training. If a page seemed to like drawing, writing verse, making up stories, the chaplain encouraged him, and showed him how to improve. Now Hal enjoyed all these; he liked music too, and soon surpassed all the other pages of the household in playing on the flute, dancing, and singing.

This seems enough to fill up a little boy's time, but this is only half of what he had to do. He had to be a perfect horseman, to learn all about armour, all the strict laws of tournament, jousting, and so on, because he was training to be a squire and to win his spurs as a knight. Now when in course of time the page did become a squire, he showed extraordinary skill in all out-of-door exercises. He still liked dancing and playing on the flute, but the lists delighted him most of all. He really could joust; he had a quick eye, a flexible wrist; he was agile and strong, and he kept himself in practice. And very soon there were great opportunities to use the skill gained by long practice.

*Clue.* *And borne him wel as of so litel space  
In hope to stonden in his ladye grace.*

We were at that time in alliance with the Flemings against their overlord, the King of France, which meant we were at war with France. Now our young squire, at the age of seventeen or so, became very ambitious to do brave deeds in this very war, so he went over

to Flanders, where many English knights were already fighting. The youth showed great bravery in many a skirmish "in Flanders, in Artois, and in Picardy." Now what feats did he perform? What brave deeds did a real young man do in that very war with France? Here is an example.

"He acted as a scout and took messages through dangerous territory. Once at Anjou, when the French assault upon the English was at its fiercest, the enemy sent for pikes and mattocks to break down and undermine the English wall. This would have left the English practically without defence. The Earl of Pembroke, the leader of the expedition, called a squire and said: 'Take my horse and go out at the back postern; we'll clear a way for you. Ride to Poitiers! Give Sir John Chandos this ring as a token from me. Tell him we are in danger.' The squire took the ring, mounted the earl's horse and galloped off without an instant's delay, determined to get to Sir John Chandos or die." (Troissart.)

And then there was the famous battle of Poitiers, when English forces under the Black Prince invaded France. We were not prepared to meet the enemy, who could be seen in the near distance marching steadily in unbreakable lines. And this is what a knight did to give the English army a chance. One who saw him tells the tale—

"James Marney went down the hill, his five squires with him. We saw him break the rush for a moment like a rock thrown into a stream then they closed over him . . . but they came on less steadily and perceptibly slower. His squires picked him up, and we picked up the squires." *Happy Warrior* (Newbolt).

Such were the feats of knights and squires "in battles long ago."

Clue. *With him there was his son. . . .*

Only when there was a truce did the daring youth return to England. His father, that very perfect gentle knight, who was also a great warrior, had just returned home from fighting for the Christian faith in heathen lands; so father and son who had both been in wars, in gratitude that they were not wounded, went as pilgrims to the shrine of Saint Thomas of

Canterbury, as the custom was, to give thank-offerings there.

#### 4. *Lesson on the Story some Little Time After the Telling*

The Tale of the Magic Horse is one of the stories worth following up after the telling. The teacher is anxious that the children's memories should store up these points at least; they are important in themselves, and absolutely necessary for the next lesson.

(A) "Although he was young, he was braver than all other lords of his time. Every one said how wise, kind, and just he was. Besides being as ambitious as any squire in his house to *do brave and honourable deeds*, he was always steadfast and true to his word."

This description of Cambius Khan is a very good version of the Knightly Code.

(B) Ladies were honoured and revered by knights and squires. The squire is interested in "the whole service of Love."

(C) The squire had read about the steed of brass. He had also read about Pegasus, and Synon the Greek who brought Troy to destruction.

(F) He places courtesy high. To carve meat for the stranger and wait upon him is a matter of course.

(L) The squire is enthusiastic about horses. He knows all about Apulian steeds and Lombardy horses. He is sure to be a skilled rider.

(N) He loves music and dancing. "The minstrels played their instruments so sweetly that it was like heaven to hear."

(O) The knight *danced* with beautiful Canacee.

These important points are actually in the story, and the wise teacher, having made the *children return upon their tracks*, and become clear by question and *carefully worded answer*, makes sure that they know them. These points will be needed at the next lesson.

#### *Lesson 5*

The material suggested in the nine stages of this "Lesson" will probably of necessity be spread over two or three lessons. For instance, a good part of one lesson of average length may

profitably be spent on discussion of the Chart (Stages 7 and 8).

*Introduction.* The teacher explains that one of the reasons why we like "The Magic Horse" so much is because the squire talks of all the things he has at heart, the things he is keenest about, e.g. the Tartar King has the qualities the young story-teller admires most. So if we look closely at all the big points he makes, all the points he stresses, we shall see the thoughts and hopes of the squire himself.

### (1) *Recapitulation*

The children are called upon *to make an effort*. The teacher sees that each child has a hectographed copy of questions like the following. They are to be answered briefly on another sheet of paper. Recapitulation can be quite a rational step.

1. About how old is our squire?
2. Where had he "won his spurs?" (Flanders, Artois, Picardy, i.e. Belgium and France.)
3. Whose favour did he hope to win if he distinguished himself? (A beautiful lady like Canacee.)
4. What were his accomplishments? What could he do to amuse his friends? (Dance, sing, tell stories, draw, etc.)
5. In what out-of-door activities do you think he excelled? (Riding, jousts and tournaments, hawking, hunting, etc.)
6. How did squires look upon service?

### (2) *Rapid Correction*

The teacher takes one child's effort, lets the others change papers and correct each other's rapidly, as she *reads out the right answers*. The papers are passed back to their owners. From the sample in her hand she has an idea of the progress of the class in quick thinking.

### (3) *Promise of Chaucer*

The teacher may tell the class that they are now going to hear about the squire, told by a poet who actually knew him, rode with him on the famous pilgrimage to Canterbury, knew the knight his father, and heard them both tell their stories to amuse the rest of the company.

### (4) *The Author's Own Words*

The teacher now reads the text modernized slightly as below, with modern pronunciation, but with attention to rhythm. Rhythm is to the teacher, apart from its own virtue, an invaluable aid in driving home the text, in familiarizing children with words in musical phrases. As the Chaucerian text is written in the couplet form, the rhyme is an aid to memory. The teacher in reading should make sure that she makes the children hear *five divisions in every line*, and the cesura or pause which is so often found after the second foot, but is by no means invariably there. The pause is marked / in the accompanying text below. The teacher is careful to give words like "and" or "of" their full prominence *in time but not in loudness*. Line 8 is the kind of line that is generally a pitfall in rhythm; the careless run the sounds together and change a line of five divisions into three, losing the real movement of the verse.

The teacher would be justified in substituting one of the synonyms for lusty; bachelor means a squire qualified to be a knight.

The text, if these few precautions are taken, goes delightfully. The children like *what Chaucer says*; they perceive by the form that it is verse; they actually see something likeable in his manner of saying it. The ground having been carefully prepared as indicated above, the text is not too long. During this first reading they simply *listen and enjoy the delightful description of their friend*.

### THE SQUIRE

With him there was his son,/ a young squire,  
A lover and a lusty (joyous, merry) bachelér,  
With locks curled/ as (if) they were laid in  
press,  
Of twenty years of age/ he was, I guess,  
Of his stature/ he was of even length, (middle  
height)  
And wonderly delyvere, (athletic) and of great  
strength;  
And he had been some time in chivalry  
In Flandres, in Artois/ and Picardy.

And (had) borne him well/ as of so litel space  
 (though in such a short time)

In hope to stand (well)/ in his lady's grace.  
 Embroidered was he,/ as if it were a mead  
 All full of fresh flowers/ white and red.  
 Singing he was,/ or fluting all the day,  
 He was as fresh/ as is the month of May.  
 Short was his gown,/ with sleeves long and  
 wide;  
 Wel could he sit on horse/ and well ride;  
 He could make songs/ and well endite (com-  
 pose a couplet)  
 Joust and eek dance/ and well portray and  
 write.  
 So hotly he loved/ that by nightertale (*in the*  
*night time*)  
 He slept no more/ than does a nightingale.  
 Courteous he was,/ lowly and serviceable,  
 And carved/ before his father at the table.

### *Fifth Stage: Listening*

The teacher now invites the children to listen to the rhythm. This is not a lesson in rhythm. The children, having been trained in fundamentals, simply take the rhythm of most poems in their stride. Without being told, the children will beat the air, gently "feeling" for the movement of the verse. They will discover in this way that there are five rising feet in each line, that every two lines are linked by rhyme, and that there is a pause in the interior of each line. The teacher will find that the children will *repeat* lines of the text several times with her, with the deepest interest, imitating her enunciation and tone the while. Feeling for the rhythm, they become familiar with the Chaucerian portrait.

### *Sixth Stage: Silent Reading*

If the teacher has been able to make copies of the text, now is the time to make use of them. Let the children read the text through to themselves. Tell them the better they know these verses, the better they will enjoy the next part of the lesson.

### *Seventh Stage: The Picture*

The teacher puts up the single illustration of the squire (not the whole group). The details of his dress, his curly hair, etc., are carefully painted in the colour plate page, 184 and in the corresponding P.J.T. Chart, as described by Chaucer. She asks the children to look at it. The children's cries of delight always hold up the lesson here; they rise from their seats, they give out Oh's and Ah's, they make appreciative remarks. The teacher quiets them by asking them to tell her what *they learn about the squire from the illustration*.

As each answer comes piecemeal, the teacher at first *herself* amplifies it by quoting the Chaucerian context. She does this several times. Later she calls upon the *child* to retrace the point she notices on the illustration by the Chaucerian line without reference to her copy; if she cannot, she looks up the reference in her copy while one who can supplies the original.

A child will say: "He has curly hair." The teacher asks, "Who can remember how Chaucer put it?" "With locks curled as (*if*) they were laid in press." "He can ride." Yes, he can! How exactly does Chaucer express that? "Well could he sit on horse, and well ride."

"He has a red and white tunic, he wears a short tunic, it is embroidered all over, he looks strong, his sleeves are long and wide." Such answers as these are given readily by observation of the illustration helped by memory of the text.

### *Eighth Stage of Lesson*

When they have thoroughly enjoyed the chart, if the children are equal to the effort, a good device is to let them compare the illustration and the literary text, and find points in the text *that are not and could not be* in the illustration.

### *Ninth Stage of Lesson*

After this instructive exercise, the children are ready to sit quietly, the picture before them, and listen again to Old Chaucer. And after all the excitement of the picture you will see some of them listening intently, some repeating the

words with you, some with half an eye on the gay squire, beating the rhythm.

The chart of the whole group is shown to the children when they have had lessons on the knight and the yeoman. We want to use the element of surprise, too valuable an aid to be disregarded; so when they have become familiar with two members, the squire and the knight, or the squire and the yeoman, we may with the introduction of the third member of the feudal group show the full illustration printed here, enlarged in the chart.

### Exercises

1. The object of all exercises, however practical, is to give that deeper knowledge that stirs the imagination and sets the mind wondering. Just as the boys and girls were trained to make an imaginative effort in following the doings of Narcissus, Orpheus, and, later, Odin, and looking on the lovable personality of Balder, so they may be set wondering about the doings and personalities of their forefathers—not very many years ago, as time in story goes.

2. It is natural to give oral and written exercises based on such themes as the suggested "Lines of Thought" (Fig. 28). Suppose the teacher is interested in dreams and horses. In Southey's *The Doctor*, Bk. I (any public library) there is a fascinating account of a dream horse called Nobs, which the rider declares

surpasses Pegasus and that wonderful steed of brass sent to the Tartar king, Cambis Khan. The movements of this horse, its bounds, spiral turns in the air, pirouettes, etc., help to bring the picture home, and cause happy laughter.

Spenser, in his *Faerie Queene*, Bk. I, gives a good account of dreams and a poetic account of Morpheus, the god of dreams. What would the Red-Cross Knight have done without his good friend, his horse. What would Shakespeare's Richard III have given for a horse at Bosworth!

There is a wonderful *war horse* in the Book of Job.

Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is a dream, *Kubla Khan* is a dream, and *The Open Door* (Housman), quoted in the previous chapter, is a beautiful prose study in dreams.

The teacher would choose from these "lines of thought" those that come into the range of thought already occupying the child's mind in the various lessons, so that without undue weariness the child can get the greatest amount of good from these different avenues of approach to knowledge, e.g. the history lesson should come just in time to supply stuff for the imaginative story that the child composes.

3. In art and in handwork the children should gradually make their own frieze, sometimes painting the figures for joy in colour, sometimes drawing and cutting them out, and then pasting them on hard paper in significant groups.

### CHAUCER'S PILGRIMS

Lessons in Chaucer obviously invite correlation with history; but the English teacher must beware of turning the lesson in literature into the mere imparting of information.

The characters in the Prologue should be presented in different attractive ways, e.g. the squire may be introduced as the teller of the story of The Magic Horse of Brass; the status of mayors and aldermen makes a good introduction to the five efficient craftsmen who, with their ambitious wives, and the romance of their political and social success, make an intimate personal appeal; the cook with his menus has an abiding interest for the young; the yeoman, when presented after Locksley and the ballads, is as irresistible as the squire.

If children are to have a good working knowledge of Chaucer's characters, the following general method is recommended: (A) The teacher should deal with a few intensively; close attention should be given to the text when the way has been prepared by story, Shakespearean songs, greenwood ballads, and good illustrations of medieval life. (B) In five or six the teacher should select three or four salient points from the Chaucerian portrait, and concentrate on these; the limitation of aim makes for accuracy. (C) Two points increased, as the lessons go on, to three, four, or more, at the discretion of the teacher, will enable the class to prove their acquaintance with the other characters in the "Identification Game" of the pilgrims on the

whole frieze half-way through the course. The P.J.T. Chaucer Charts form the basis of this frieze.

### *The Yeoman*

Lessons on the yeoman have a definite purpose: to interest boys and girls of ten in the yeoman who went, with the "verray parfit gentil knight" and his son who was "Curteis, lowly, and servisable," on the pilgrimage to Canterbury. The knight, squire, and yeoman are chosen not only because teachers have proved their power to delight children of this age, but for their intrinsic value: they are fine examples of the creative power of a great mind. Chaucer's characterization, his way of recording his experience, impress on the minds of boys and girls a standard of excellence.

Introduced after the Robin Hood ballads, where knight, squire, and yeomen are so often linked together; and perhaps after Locksley and the Disinherited Knight of Ivanhoe, the champion of Rebecca; these portraits deepen impressions of beauty and expand ideas already received. They come as a revelation, and are irresistible to boys and girls alike.

### *Ballads as Preparation*

The enthusiastic teacher should make a special study of ballads, and present them to children by the dramatic method at least a term before this course of Chaucer lessons. The greenwood with which the children become familiar through Locksley, Robin and his merry men, will create the background of Chaucer's forester; but Chaucer should not even be mentioned while the boys are enjoying the ballads. When they have dramatized "Alan a Dale," they should be encouraged to learn the last verse—

*And thus having ended this mery wedding,  
The bride lookt as fresh as a queen,  
And so they return'd to the mery green-wood,  
Among the leaves so green.*

So, too, the following verses in "Adam Bell, Clym and William of Cloudesley"—

*Merry it was in the grene foreste,  
Among the leves grene,*

*Whereas men hunt east and west  
Wylth bowes and arrowes hene.  
To raise the deer out of their denne;  
Such sights hath oft bene seen;  
As by three yemen of the north countrey,  
By them it is I mean.*

When Robin in the greenwood groups knight, squire, and yeoman together, notably in "A little Geste of Robin Hood and his Meiny," the ballad presents an idea that the portrayal of Chaucer's feudal group will reinforce—

*"It were great shame," said Robin,  
"A knight alone to ride,  
Withouté squire, yeoman, or page,  
To walke by his side.  
"I shall thee lend Little John, my man,  
For he shall be thy knave;  
In a yeoman's stead he may thee stand,  
If thou great needé have."*

When Robin Hood establishes his law, knight, squire, and yeoman are linked so closely that the way is prepared for the introduction of Chaucer's group: "Look ye first that ye do no harm to *any company where there is a woman* therein; and after that look ye do no harm to him that tilleth with plough; no more shall ye harm no good yeoman, nor knight, nor squire that will be a good fellow."

The teacher should emphasize the coat and hood of Lincoln green whenever they appear in ballads, for this is the traditional dress of the forester; and the children will reward the teacher when the time comes by telling him how Chaucer's yeoman must be dressed and equipped, instead of his telling them. The lines from "Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne" should be memorized—

*They cast on their gowns of green,  
And took their bows each one.*

So, too, the lines from "Robin and his Meiny, 8th Fytte"—

*When they were clothed in Lincoln green,  
They cast away their gray,  
"Now we shall to Nottingham,"  
And thus our king gan say.*





YEOMAN, SQUIRE, AND KNIGHT

(1.36.2)



THE PLOUGHMAN AND THE MILLER

(1. 1062)

171



The class should be lured by rhythmical exercises and other devices into observation of verses that show the *horn* to be indispensable to yeoman, archer, and hunter—

(a) *Robin took a full great horn,*

*And loude he gan blow,*  
*Seven score of wight young men*  
*Came ready on a row.*

("Robin and his Meiny.")

(b) *Then Robin put his horn to his mouth,*  
*And blew blasts two or three;*  
*When four and twenty bowmen bold*  
*Come leaping over the lea.*

("Alan a Dale," xx.)

(c) The verses recording how the chief of the merry men set his back against a tree and "pulled out a bugle horn"—

*He put the little end to his mouth,*  
*And a loud blast did he blow,*  
*Till three score and ten of bold Robin's men*  
*Came running all on a row.*

("Robin and Bishop of Hereford.")

In one of the rhythm lessons and in the singing lesson the boys should be introduced to Shakespeare's "What shall he have that killed the deer?" Many of the most spirited ballads describe the yeomen's skill in using the bow. These should be made familiar by dramatization.

*"Bend all your bows," said Robin,*  
*And with the grey goose wing,*  
*Such sport now show as you would do,*  
*In the presence of the king."*

*They shewed such brave archery*  
*By cleaving sticks and wands.*

The ballad of "Durham Field" shows yeomen with sharp swords as well as long-bows of yew, and grey-goose arrows—

*Ther beene bold yeomen in merry England,*  
*Husbandmen stiffe and strong;*  
*Sharpe swords they do wear*  
*Bareyn bowes and arrowes long.*

In the dramatization or recitation of the ballads, the children are trained to use the archaic accentuation; this training prepares

the way for one of the methods of presenting the pilgrimage to Canterbury as a real event described by a poet of the fourteenth century. (See below.)

Boys wax enthusiastic over the archery contest in the tournament of Ashby-de-la-Zouche; they take note, without the bidding of the teacher, of Locksley's attention to his arrows. They should be required to write out verses in the ballads that describe the arrows as made of grey-goose feathers; but let them also hear, dramatize, and read the ballad of "Robin Hood and his Meiny," where Sir Richard at the Lee gets together an hundred bows, an hundred sheaf of arrows, each of them an ell long and fitted with peacock feathers. ("Robin Hood and his Meiny": Fytte II, 132.)

When a number of ballads have been made familiar by dramatization, and the points suggested above have become matters of course to the boys, the teacher, knowing that this is the moment to introduce Chaucer, prepares his lessons. He must get a clear mental picture of Chaucer's yeoman before he can present the character satisfactorily.

### Teacher's Knowledge

The squire chooses to ride to Canterbury with only one servant, a yeoman.

This yeoman passes his life out of doors, as his sunburned complexion shows. He wears on his left arm the arm-guard of *an archer*; this arm-guard was a kind of sleeve, brilliant in colour. He is a *good forester*, i.e. he knows all about forestry—the cultivation of timber, the forest laws, etc. He is clean-shaven and close-cropped, but this is not apparent as he rides to Canterbury, for his head is covered with a *green hood*; his coat, too, is green, and belted at the waist; under this belt on his right side he carries a *sheaf of well-plumed arrows*, made not of the usual *goose feathers*, but of peacock feathers. Being "*cut low*"—a technical phrase meaning that they were cut short and close, so that they could not droop in their flight—they speed lightly and swiftly. In his right hand, our sunburned yeoman bears an *enormous bow*. He actually wears, in addition, a sword and shield on one side, and on the other

a bright dagger, richly ornamented and as sharp pointed as a spear. A green baldric is passed over one shoulder and under the opposite arm; to this baldric is suspended a horn. On the yeoman's breast is pinned a bright silver brooch with the figure of *S. Christopher*, the patron saint of foresters, of field, and of sport.

### Lessons on the Yeoman

*Apparatus.* An illustration of the yeoman in colour, to be shown when discussing his appearance: dress, weapons; illustrations of the knight and squire to be used when revising the characters and the motives of these two pilgrims to Canterbury; illustrations of other characters taken rapidly in previous lessons (see p. 185, methods B and C). After intensive study of the yeoman as described here, three or four other pilgrims should be taken rapidly; the ploughman and the reeve, attached to the land, and the miller, skilled in wrestling, may well follow the yeoman.

This accumulation of illustrations, which are intended to show the medieval dress of the persons and other distinguishing features given in the Prologue, prepares the children gradually to recognize the pilgrims when presented to them on a complete frieze half-way through a course of Chaucer lessons.

### Introduction

The teacher develops the subject of the pilgrimage. The class should be asked questions such as the following: How many of the characters who were riding to Canterbury can you name? What particular place were they going to? What happened when pilgrims got to Canterbury?

The teacher should revise some of the probable motives of pilgrimage, and enlarge on hero-worship, the wonderful gems to be seen on the chief shrines, the marvellous cathedral itself, the love of travelling, the desire to see the world. Put up the pictures of the knight and squire, now old friends. Question the children as to their activities before we meet them at the Tabard inn in Southwark; get from the class

that the soldiers' gratitude for their safe return will be expressed in offerings at Canterbury.

The teacher says to his class—

"Chaucer describes the only attendant of the knight and squire. Listen."

### The Teacher's Reading

He then reads any six or more lines: (1) in the Chaucerian dialect; (2) marking well the rhythm and metre.

N.B.—As the squire serves the knight, the yeoman serves the squire—

*A yéman hadde he / and servaunts name.  
At that tyme for / him liste ryde so.*  
(Pause here.)

*And he was clad / in cote and hood of grene ;  
A sheef of pecok arves / brighte and kene  
Under his belt he bar / ful thriftily ;  
(Wel coude he dresse / his laken yémanly ;  
His arves drouped noght / with feltheres lowe)  
And in his hand he bar / a mighty bowe.*

In these six lines we have the signs of the yeoman's craft; then follow three lines reminding us that he is a forester—

*A not-heed hadde he / with a broun visage.  
Of wode-craft / wel coude he al the usage.  
Upon his arm / he bar a gay bracer ;  
And by his syde / a swerd and a bokeler,  
And on that other syde / a gay daggere  
Harnised wel / and sharp as point of spere.*

Here we have an example of the yeoman's service,

*A Cristofre on his brest / of silver shene.  
An horn he bar, / the barbrik was of grene ;  
A forster was he, soothly, / as I gesse.*

1. *The teacher reads six lines in the Chaucerian dialect.* The object of this is to bring home to the children that our poet lived more than 500 years ago, and that this feudal group—knight, squire, and yeoman—lived more than 500 years ago. The more difficult the class find it, the better;

for the teacher may then explain that the event took place *so long ago* that our very language was different.

2. *The teacher reads with well-marked rhythm and metre.* The object of this is to convey fairly to the class that they are listening to a *poetic record*. With this aim, the teacher reads the text so as to mark the couplet arrangement; he observes the end of line pause, and emphasizes the rhyme word that links the lines of the couplets.

*A yeman hadde he / and servaunts namo,  
At that tyme for / him liste ryde so.*

*And on that other syde / a gay daggere,  
Harnised wel / and sharp as point of spere.*

The teacher not only conveys a couplet, but the *heroic couplet*, i.e. he makes the children hear (a) five rising dissyllabic feet (five iambic feet) in every line, (b) a medial pause in every line—very often after the second foot, sometimes after the third, occasionally after the first or even after the fourth; but that pause, wherever it occurs, must be observed.

In lines 2, 3, 6, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16 the pause is after the second foot. In lines 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17 the pause is after the third foot.

Necessary for the rhythm, and also for rendering something like the Chaucerian dialect, is the dissyllabic pronunciation of *hadde*, *liste*, *ryde*, *arrees*, *drouped*, *wode* (in "wode-craft").

*Pronunciation.* Any approach to the Chaucerian pronunciation has an unforeseen fascination for the children; they dwell on phrases and whole lines with delight; they feel the influence of first-hand evidence that the great event took place more than 500 years ago. Their imaginations are stirred.

Pronounce the long vowel *i* like *ee* in "need." This sound is written very often as *ÿ*, e.g. *tyme*, *ryde*.

*Visage* and *usage*, *bokeler* and *bracer*, are accented on the last syllable, French-wise: *daggere* rhymes with *spere*, like French *merie*.

*Harnised* is trisyllabic with the accent on the second syllable.

The unaccented vowel *e* which occurs so frequently is pronounced like "e" in French *le*, e.g. *tyme*, *arrees*.

### Readings with Modern Pronunciation

The teacher now reads the passage giving the modern pronunciation, but still conveying the metre, to the class. He wishes them to see Chaucer's verbal portrait as a whole, to feel its completeness and its charm. They are in contact with a great mind. He recites or reads the description again, still using modern pronunciation.

### Using the Picture

The teacher then puts up the Chart picture of the yeoman, showing medieval dress, and physical and other distinguishing features mentioned by Chaucer.

He questions the class educating details of dress. The class may offer "he was dressed in green" or "he wore Lincoln green." Accept such answers but send the children back in thought to the Chaucerian text. How does Chaucer express it?

*And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.*

What did he wear under his belt? Why under his belt? *How does Chaucer express it?* Correct the answers given, and let the last word be the Chaucerian text—

*A shcef of peacock arrees brighte and kene  
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily.*

Ask why the yeoman rides thus armed.

Ask if peacock arrows were used ordinarily. What feathers were used? Who can quote a ballad verse illustrating this fact?

Draw attention to the yeoman's *skill* in dressing his arrows.

*Wel coude he dresse his takel yemanly.*

He knew well how to prepare and use his weapons, like every good yeoman.

Explain that he cuts his peacock feathers low, short, and close, so that they will not droop in their flight, but will speed lightly and swiftly. Clearly our yeoman is an expert.

In the *illustration* the yeoman bears his "mighty bow"; the children, seeing it, should be able to name this weapon and, on demand, supply

examples from the ballads illustrating the general use of the long-bow by the yeomanry.

Chaucer tells us that the yeoman had special knowledge of something other than bows and arrows. Ask the class if they remember; if they do not, help them by asking where Robin and his men lived? Where did Locksley live in *Ivanhoe*? Get them to the idea of foresters and forest, our modern terms forest-craft and forestry for wood-craft. Explain in what the craft consists.

Connect the out-of-door life and the forester's sunburned visage shown in the illustration. Compare the out-of-door sport of the knight and squire. *Put up the Chart showing this group of three.* Ask the class what other weapons the forester carried as he rode to Canterbury. These are in the accompanying illustration, which will act as a reminder. Ask why and for whom he carries them. Read the first line of the passage—

*A yeman hadde he, and servants namo.*

Tell them to listen. You are going to read a couplet to them—

*Upon his arm he bar a gay bracer,  
And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler.*

Explain that the bright-coloured sleeve (gay bracer) could not be shown in the illustration as it is on the rider's left arm. Explain the need for a sleeve of unyielding material so that there would be no folds or creases to impede the movement of the arrow.

Ask why the yeoman wears the badge of St. Christopher. Enlarge upon patron saints.

Let the class examine the green baldric in the picture, and see how it is passed over one shoulder and under the other arm.

Give them the Chaucerian couplet with modern pronunciation—

*A Christopher on his breast of silver sheen.  
An horn he bore, the baldric was of green.*

Ask the children what use the foresters in the ballads made of the horn.

The teacher should once again read the portrait through, for the children are now able to feel more of its beauty.

### Using the Frieze

For the last stage of the lesson put before the children the frieze of all the characters they have studied, including Chaucer himself, who was one of the pilgrims. Let the miller lead; the reeve must be last.

Let the children volunteer to identify a given character.

If a boy says he can point out the miller, let him name the signs of recognition to show he deserves the honour of coming and pointing out the miller; the teacher repeats the full Chaucerian line, as a reminder to the child.

The volunteer who thinks he can point out the franklin must be challenged: "Prove to us all that you know him." "He has a white beard," says the boy. "Who remembers how Chaucer put it?" asks the teacher.

*Whyt was his berd, as is the dayesye.*

He who remembers best deserves best to come to the frieze. "What else do you know of him?" "He had a red face." The teacher recalls to them the Chaucerian line—

*Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.*

And so on.

Full lessons on the prioress, the wife of Bath, the poor parson, the franklin, the five craftsmen, the monk and the friar, the merchant, and the shipman should be given during the year. The remaining characters can be dealt with as described above in methods B and C. In time, every member of the class will be able to reproduce the essential traits of every pilgrim. They really take pleasure in the strange language which transports them to by-gone days; they "admire" Chaucer and his healthy way of looking at life, and the squire, "lowly and servable"; they see the "worth" of characters like the yeoman; and the five craftsmen and the poor parson, with his devotion to duty, give them "hope." In characters and stories all find something to "love." Lastly, one and all delight in the splendour of a mediæval scene, brought home to them by the colour of the Chaucerian frieze.

## SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR BOOKS AND READING

IT is not possible, nor is it desirable, to give full and exhaustive lists of books that should be in the class or school library. In the first place it would be unwise to attempt to forecast the needs of children in a particular school. They, with the help of their teachers, must be the best judges of what they would like to read and of the books that could most usefully be put on the shelves in their library. Moreover, if, as has been suggested in another section, children are to be allowed to help in choosing their own books it is obviously useless to decide beforehand the type of book they ought to choose. Neither is it necessary to separate books into categories according to the ages of the readers, for children differ widely, not only in reading ability but also in taste. It is, of course, possible to say that certain books are generally suitable for the younger age group 7 to 9, and others for those aged 9 to 11, but apart from this broad distinction there is no need to give a list of books for each of the four years of the Junior School. There will be a natural selection by the children of the books they want, and as they make progress in reading they will choose books of increasingly difficult language, the matter of which is suited to their ages. If, on the other hand, they are backward in reading ability and are given books beyond their powers of comprehension, the very thing might happen that we are striving to avoid: they might turn against reading.

The wise teacher will avoid this danger. He will use standardized tests in order to place each child in the right reading group, and he will take care to see that there are books available which will cater for all the reading ages of the class.

We have agreed that there should be considerable latitude in the simplicity or the difficulty of the subject-matter and we must put away any preconceived ideas as to children's likes and dislikes. It is not every boy who devours eagerly stories about aeroplane pilots or racing motorists; not all girls enjoy school stories or domestic stories about girls who take Mother's place in

the home. There can be considerable overlapping here and it is wise to allow freedom of choice.

Into what classes of stories can children's reading be divided? We can make a rough division as follows--

- Animal and Nature stories.
- Adventure - historical and modern.
- Fantasy and Fairy.
- True stories - usually biographical.

We may also include Children's Annuals and books of Bible Stories. Books that might be termed children's Classics - books that children ought to have the opportunity of reading because they are the birthright of all children—can also be put into one category.

We are more likely to attract children to reading if the books they handle are attractive. Younger children particularly like pictures and the illustrations are to them often as important as the text. Select, and guide the children to select, books that are well illustrated, well printed, and pleasant to handle.

The list that follows is not in any sense intended to be complete. Most educational publishers produce graded sets of story books for children. These are usually admirable and teachers can rely on most of them to satisfy the needs of their pupils. All that is being attempted in this section is to suggest the type of book to be put before Junior School pupils and to give titles of certain books that the writer has found to be outstandingly valuable and helpful or which have been well loved by children.

### CHILDREN'S CLASSICS (Some of these may be mentioned again under other headings.)

- The Wind in the Willows.*
- Robinson Crusoe*.
- Treasure Island.*
- Kidnapped.*
- Little Women.*
- The Fairy Tales of Grimm and Hans Andersen
- Folk and Fairy Tales of Other Lands
- Greek and Roman Myths
- Legends and Folk Tales of Our Own Country, e.g. Stories of King Arthur and Robin Hood
- Simple stories from *The Odyssey*
- Peter Pan.*
- Black Beauty*
- Alice in Wonderland*

*Alice Through the Looking Glass.**The Jungle Books.**The Just So Stories.**Stories of Brier Rabbit.**Tom Sawyer**Huckleberry Finn.*

The teacher will add to this list. There are sure to be books that particular teachers have loved in their own childhood which they will want to introduce to the children they teach.

## ANIMAL AND NATURE STORIES

*The Wind in the Willows.*

A book which should become a familiar friend to children of all ages. For young children, certain more difficult chapters may be omitted. There should be a first reading by the teacher and more than one copy should be available in the library.

*The Père Castor Wild Animal Books* (George Allen & Unwin. Translated by Rose Fyleman.)

*Mischief: The Squirrel.**Quipic: The Hedgehog.**Piwo: The Wild Duck.**Martin: The Kingfisher.**Frou: The Hare.**Bourrou: The Brown Bear.**Seaf: The Seal.**Cuckoo.*

These beautifully produced little books are admirable. The lithographs by Rojan are real works of art and the text is informative yet very readable. All these books should be in the Library of every Junior School.

*Flame.* (Daphne Winstone: Peter Lunn.)

This is a book about a horse written by a girl of 12. The story is interesting and the illustrations are first class.

*Adventures of Sam Pig.* (Allison Utley: Faber & Faber.)

*Sam Pig goes to Market.**Sam Pig and Sally, etc.*

These tales are popular with children, many of whom develop quite an affection for the little pig who is the main character. His adventures are described in sensible language, and there is no suggestion of "writing down" to children.

*The Grey Rabbit Books.* (Allison Utley: John Murray.)

These are for younger children. Attractively written and well illustrated, they have a strong appeal.

*Koobar the Koala.* (Barrett & Shead: Oxford University Press.)

A well-told story with good pictures. Children are very interested in these attractive animals.

*Jerry: The Story of an Exmoor Pony.* (Helme & Paul. Illus. Cecil Aldin: Eyre & Spottiswoode.)

Stories about horses appeal very much to certain children, and this one has excellent illustrations by Cecil Aldin as well as a good story.

*Black Beauty.*

This autobiography of a horse still maintains its popularity.

*Claudius the Bee.* (John Leeming: Harrap.)

This delightful tale of a boy who befriends a bee and is made free of the bee's nest will fascinate children from 9 to 11.

*Winnie the Pooh.* (A. A. Milne.)*The House at Pooh Corner.*

These books are too well known to need comment. The age group from 7 to 9 will probably enjoy them if they are introduced and read by the teacher, but the humour may be a little too subtle for the very young.

*Tammy Troot.* (Lavinia Derwent: Pitman.)*Tammy Troot's Capers.*

The hero of these books will be well known to the many children who have listened to his adventures in the Children's Hour. The author has made real characters of Tammy Troot, his friends, and his Granny, and these tales will delight children from 7 to 9.

*The Adventures of Larry the Lamb.* (Toy Town Series. Lapworth & Co.)

There are eight titles in this series of stories, which again will enable children to recapture the enjoyment they experienced while listening to them on the radio.

## ADVENTURE STORIES

There are many books in this category which might be read, and it would be an obvious waste of time to mention more than a few which may not have come to the notice of all teachers.

*He Went with Christopher Columbus.* (Louise Andrews Kent: Harrap.)

*He Went with Vasco da Gama.*

*He Went with Marco Polo.*

No better way of introducing children to the story of discovery could be found than by putting these books before them. The history is sound and the stories are well told.

*Treasure Island.*

A well-tried and always popular story which should be read by the teacher as an introduction to its fascinating adventures.

*Kidnapped.*

This is not so popular, but the top class will enjoy it, if it is treated carefully.

*Greek and Roman Myths.*

*Norse Myths.*

*English Legends*, e.g. Robin Hood, Tales of King Arthur.

There are many versions of these stories. Children should become acquainted with the folk-lore of their own and other lands.

*Five on a Treasure Island.* (Enid Blyton: Hodder & Stoughton.)

An exciting story of what happened to five children when they were on holiday. The children are natural

## SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR BOOKS AND READING 191

in behaviour and speech, and the book should appeal equally to boys and girls. Other books in this series have recently been published.

*With Morgan on the Main.* (C. M. Bennett: Dean & Son.)

A typical example of the "adventures with pirates" type of story.

*Treasure of the Tortoise Island.* (Hagen & Hawkins: Collins.)

An exciting and convincing story for 11-year-olds.

*Bush Christmas.* (Smart and Borer: Pitman.)

This story is based on the children's film of the same name, and the book is illustrated with "stills" from the film. It is an excellent story, told in a convincing way, about boys and girls who act and talk sensibly, and the adventures will appeal to most of the 10-11 age group.

*With Scott to the Pole.* (Re-told by Howard Marshall: Country Life.)

An example of the true, biographical adventure story. Every British boy and girl ought to know the great epic of Scott, and no better introduction could be found than this edition, with its clearly-told story and excellent photographs.

*The Puffin Story Books.* (Ed. Eleanor Graham: Penguin Books, Ltd.)

This series of children's stories has the merit of being cheap and of containing a number of excellent stories for children from 10 to 11. The fact that we can obtain cheaply good, carefully-written tales more than makes up for the inevitable deficiencies in form, printing, and illustration.

*The Puffin Picture Books.* (Ed. Noel Carrington: Penguin Books, Ltd.)

These well-known booklets should be in every school. Whether they are telling the story of Orlando the Cat, explaining how a motor-car works, or giving us a History of the Country-side, they are first rate in illustration and text.

*The Green Jacket Series.* (Various authors: Pitman.)

Such well-known authors as The Zoo Man, L. A. G. Strong, and Marjorie Bowen contribute to this series, which illustrates how one publishing house caters for the modern child. The books might well be introduced into the library for the use of the top age group. While it is not every successful author who can write for children, the names attached to this series guarantee that the prose will be good and the stories full of incident.

### FAIRY-TALE AND FANTASY

#### Fairy Tales.

Not only should the well-known collections of Grimm and Andersen be available, but folk and fairy tales of other countries might well be introduced. A well-illustrated and interesting example of this is—

*Folk and Fairy Stories from Czechoslovakia* (re-told by E. J. Erben, introduced by Jan Masaryk: P. R. Gawthorn, Ltd.).

*Dr. Dolittle Stories* continue to interest children of the younger age-group.

*The Little Grey Men.* (B. B. : Eyre & Spottiswoode.)

This story of the last gnomes in Britain may prove a little difficult in language, but for some children it will open a door into a new world. The adventures of the gnomes as they travel up the Folly River to find their lost brother bring the life of the countryside vividly before the young reader, while the charm of the story is enhanced by the delicate illustrations.

### OTHER BOOKS, ANNUALS, PERIODICALS, ETC.

Here are some examples of the type of books which may be overlooked, but which should be sought out and put before children so that they may have the opportunity of reading in the not-so-usual fields.

*Great Musicians' Series.* (Opal Wheeler and Sybil Deucher: Faber & Faber.)

Most children will like these well-produced books with their excellent print and interesting illustrations. For the music-loving child they will be a joy, especially as simple extracts from the composer's works are given. Here are some of the seven titles—

*Handel at the Court of Kings.*

*Mozart, the Wonder Boy.*

*Ludwig Beethoven and the Chiming Tower Bells.*

*The Land of Little Rain.* (Muriel H. Fellows: Harrap.)

This story of the Hopi Indian children by an American schoolmistress is produced with care and written with an understanding of children's needs. The illustrations are beautifully coloured, and the end-papers and chapter tail-pieces are stimulating.

*My Bible Book.* (Joyce Lankester Brisley: Harrap.)

An example of the type of book which may be used to introduce children to the Bible stories. It is simply written and well illustrated.

*The Laughing Hour.* (M. Forster Knight: Pitman.)

This is a collection of story, verse, and pictures suitable for children aged 7 to 9. It is a useful anthology into which the child can dip and find something to interest him, something he can say or sing or make a story about. More anthologies of this type might usefully be introduced to children at all ages.

The many Annuals that fill the shops at Christmas time may be useful in attracting the child who is suspicious of school reading. If he sees the familiar annuals in the school or class library he will begin to realize that reading in school is not perhaps such a bore as he thought. There are also several weekly or monthly periodicals that might find their way on to the library tables. One of these is the recently-published *Junior*. Although it will be too advanced in tone for most of the juniors, it may well be introduced for the sake of the few who will find it full of up-to-date information, stimulating ideas, and readable stories.

The *Children's Newspaper* might be introduced for the more thoughtful child. *The Boys' Own Paper* and *The Girls' Own Paper* are also a little difficult for Junior Schools, but should be introduced to show that there is some interesting alternative to the ordinary "comic." *The Scout* will always attract some older

boys. There is a real need for a weekly or monthly paper for boys and girls from 9 to 11 which is a cross between the "comic" and the too "educational" type of magazine.

No mention has been made of books of reference, encyclopaedias, or books which cater for the practical side of the child's nature. There are many volumes published nowadays which give information in an interesting way with diagrams and pictures predominating.

*The Children's Encyclopaedia* is well-known, and the volumes, if put on the library shelves in school, will be well used and will prove very popular. They are excellent for stimulating thought, for giving general information, and for introducing children to story and verse.

A sentence from that excellent book *The Language and Mental Development of Children*, by A. F. Watts, sums up the method of approach to the books that are not of the story-book type.

Dr. Watts says: "It is by the encouragement of wide reading in easy books that present the romantic aspects of their subjects, by vivid oral teaching, by the skilful use of good pictures, and by the provision of opportunities for practical activity in connection with what is being learned, that the appetite of the child can best be stimulated and his curiosity turned to good account."

### Testing Reading

Are we to make any attempt to test the reading that the child does in school for his own pleasure? No sensible person would suggest that the "test" should be a formal one, but on the other hand, is it wise to allow the reading to go on week after week without any knowledge as to the child's power of understanding what he has read? Each child should keep a record in a special notebook of the books he reads and he can add a remark as to whether he enjoyed the book he has just finished. If absolute honesty is encouraged in this recording, the teacher can find out much by discussing with individuals or with the class the reason for the popularity or otherwise of a particular book. At all times the teacher should hold himself ready to answer the questions the child will want to ask, and if he keeps a personal record of such questions they will be of assistance in assessing the value

of that particular book and they will be a guide to the individual difficulties of the children. With the older children in the Junior School, it is a good idea to let them give a written or oral "review" of the book they have read; younger children can talk to the teacher freely about their stories. From these discussions and reports the teacher will learn much and the children will gradually build up the beginnings of a critical sense.

### Poetry Books and Anthologies

There is no perfect anthology of poetry. People who compile anthologies have their own ideas as to what constitutes a good poem and they also want to include poems they have enjoyed. This is as it should be, and the greater variety in the selection of poems, the better. All we can do here is to give the names of some collections of verse for Junior pupils which have proved useful and have been enjoyed by children. There are many more, probably equally good, but the writer knows the books in the list which follows and can vouch for their success in the classroom—

"LAUREL AND GOLD SERIES" (Crossland, Collins): *Laurel and Gold*, *Stardust and Silver* (for children 5 to 9). *Junior Laurel and Gold. Narrative Poetry*.

"KING'S TREASURES SERIES": *Junior Modern Poetry* (Wilson: Dent).

THE PIPER POEMS: FIRST SERIES (Freemand and Swami: Gregg). Books 1, 2, 3.

*Good Company Poetry* (Moubray: Davis & Moughton). Books 1, 2, 3.

*Anthology of English Verse for Schools—Primary* (Potter and Potter: Pitman). Books 1, 2, 3, 4.

*A New English Treasury (Prose and Verse*, Potter: Pitman). Books 1, 2, 3, 4.

*Pattern Poetry* (Wilson: Nelson). Books 1 and 1A.

*Happy Lines* (Kaye: Cassell). Books 1, 2, 3, 4.

*Adventures Into Poetry* (Daunt: MacMillan). Junior Books 1, 2, 3.

*The Enchanted Way* (Newell: A. & C. Black). Books 1, 2, 3, 4.

*Speech Rhymes* (Sansom: A. & C. Black). This can be used for choral speaking also.

## ADDITIONAL STORIES STORY BUILDING

ONE ideal purpose of education is to help the child to think. Imagination is closely allied with thinking, and by the exercise of it the child gets nearer to the meaning of things in life and to the sympathetic understanding of them.

It is not possible to offer imagination to the child as a gift, but it is within one's ability to provide food on which the imagination may grow and stimulus which will help it to develop.

The mental power to image is an early stage in the development of imagination. This is followed by an increased ability to use that power in the selection and regrouping of familiar images to form a picture which will illustrate some idea in the mind.

The power to make mental pictures increases through exercise. The right kind of material on which to practise and the opportunity to use it are among the children's needs. Story lessons make the greatest appeal to the younger children, and, therefore, provide the readiest and most attractive material for the development of the power of imagery.

This power to make mental pictures will be increased by listening to the stories told or read by the teacher, when she makes word pictures stand out in clear-cut fashion, but it can also be developed, tested, and tried by methods of story building by the class.

### Sequence in Story Building

The children can gradually get a clear conception of the plan of stories. They learn to express a story in a series of word pictures which have first been composed in the mind and seen clearly in the mind's eye.

Progression will be an important feature in this training, and one way of attack is through a series of stages in story building, each stage being a development from the preceding one.

Though the ultimate aim is to help the chil-

dren to make *mental* pictures, the work may be based on those that are visible.

It will be noted in the examples which follow that the demand made on the imagination of the child is increased at each step, and as the response quickens the mental pictures which result are fuller and richer in content.

For this work pictorial charts of Figs. 29-32 and 38-41 have been prepared, and an Appendix (page 260) gives directions for squaring up small illustrations and reproducing them on the blackboard.

### Stage I: *Tim and the Saucepan*

This set of pictures is intended to suggest a complete story with the minimum of demand on the imagination of the class. The whole story lies on the surface. The pictures will be shown to the class one at a time, so that the story unfolds as the lesson goes on.

*Picture I. The Camp* (Fig. 29). The owner of the tent has a double saucepan. Tim watches



FIG. 29  
*The Camp*

her put down the inner part of the pan. The outer pan in her hand should suggest to the children a reason why she is absent from the second picture.

*Picture 2. Tim's Curiosity.* The children will see that Tim is attracted by the saucepan (Fig. 30). If they can detect that his position suggests the action of sniffing they may be able

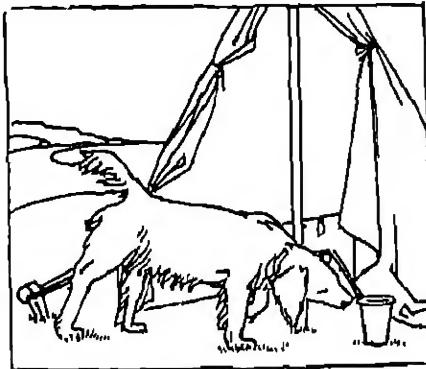


FIG. 30  
*Tim's Curiosity*

to anticipate his next movement. In any case they will not be surprised to see what happens.

*Picture 3. Plight of Tim.* A short link is needed in the story to connect this picture (Figs. 31-33) with the previous one, but it is so obvious that the children will have no difficulty in providing it. Each child may have a little picture in his mind of the moment when Tim actually put his head into the saucepan and found that he

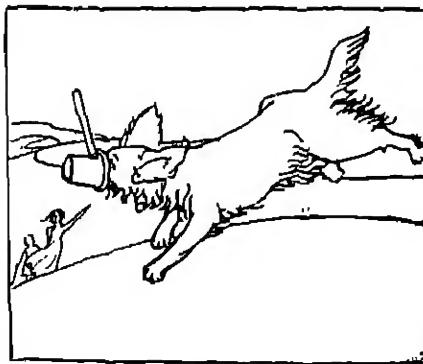


FIG. 31  
*Tim's Plight*

could not pull it out. Any one of these pictures may be expressed in words, and the best word picture used as the link between Pictures 2 and 3 when the story is put together.

The action of the two figures to the left should be discussed by the children. Before moving on to Picture 4 the children may try to give suggestions as to how Tim is to be released. Such suggestions should be the expression in words of little pictures which have been formed mentally.

*Picture 4. The Tug-of-War.* This picture (Fig. 32) speaks for itself, and forms the conclusion of the story.

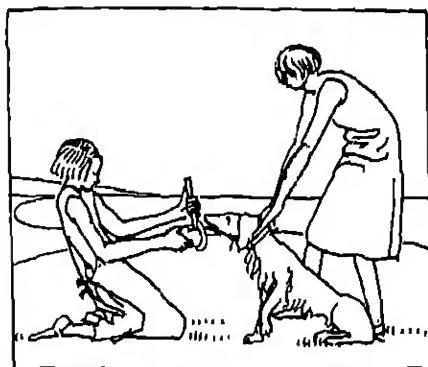


FIG. 32  
*The Tug-of-War*

Those children who have failed to make a mental picture as a conclusion will be helped by looking at the work of some one else, while those who have been successful will be interested to compare their pictures and say in what way they are different.

### *Development of Stage I*

Before passing on to Stage II it is possible and desirable to make further use of the material of Stage I, and to apply what has been incidentally taught as well as directly.

1. *Analysis of the Story.* The subject of each picture suggests a separate link in the story. A diagram can be made by the combined effort of the class as described under "Analysis of Stories" (see pages 266-7).

To supply suitable phrases which will serve both as titles for the pictures and as notes for the diagram is a good exercise for the children in the study of English.

This diagrammatic work has another value.

It sets out the completed story and also gives the idea of unity. The pictures if taken alone tend to break up the story too much, unless it is later to be brought together.

2. *Written Work.* Each child may then write the story in full. This work is likely to be of a better standard if it follows careful preparation.

3. *Individual Work.* Apparatus can be provided which will lead to individual written work, and will test the power of each child. Four or more little pictures can be drawn on a card. The action in one picture should be very near to that of the next, so that every normal child in the class should be able to trace the story without any help of any kind. If the cards provide some variety of stories, each child can work through three or four, and so will gain plenty of practice before passing on to Stage II. Such apparatus is already on the market, if a teacher does not want to make it herself.

If the cards are mounted on thick cardboard and varnished, they will last for a long time.

## Stage II

It is tempting to use story building from pictures merely as a pleasant change in method in story making, and it is possible for the children to enjoy the work and yet not show much visible sign of progress as the result of it. But all teachers who appreciate the value of sequence in teaching will wish to extend the early methods of story building until the children's work shows a distinct advance.

### *The Elves and the Shoemaker*

The aim of this second series of pictures will be to increase the demand made on the imagination of the class. The children will be expected to be more original in their contribution toward the making of mental pictures. These pictures will be needed to complete the story which is to be built out of the picture material. Consequently this set of pictures will *not* present all the story on their surface. Much more concentrated observation of the pictures will be needed to detect all the points that are there to help toward the building of the story.

As in Stage I, the pictures will be presented

one at a time until the series is before the class, the discussion of each to be more exhaustive than in the previous stage.

The subject for these pictures has been taken from Grimm's fairy tale "The Elves and the Shoemaker," but the pictures are intended to be used for their present purpose with a class that does not know the story. Later they can be used as an illustration only.

When the children have finished making their own stories from the pictures, they will be interested to listen to the story as given by the Brothers Grimm. To meet the original story in



FIG. 33  
*The Shoemaker*

this way may, incidentally, help to set a standard in story making.

It may be noticed in passing, that one way to find picture material which can lead to story building is to take some classical fairy tale or other suitable story, analyse it into three or four pictorial scenes, and draw an illustration for each.

*Picture 1. The Shoemaker.* The children should first find all that they can in the picture (Fig. 33) without any help from the teacher. The points observed can be noted on the blackboard. Occasionally each child might discuss the picture with his neighbour for a moment, as such little conversations often give rise to good suggestions, and the notes on the blackboard are thereby increased in number and in quality.

If all the necessary points for the building of the story have not been picked out, a series of questions can be asked to direct the children's minds to the missing ones.

The main points in this picture, which a class may be expected to find, are—

The occupation of the man as a shoemaker, gained from the tools and the last; the poverty of the man, as shown by his patched clothes; the curtain across the door, which can suggest that the panes are of glass; the night hour of ten, the clock with its calling cuckoo being noticed in conjunction with the guttering candle; the

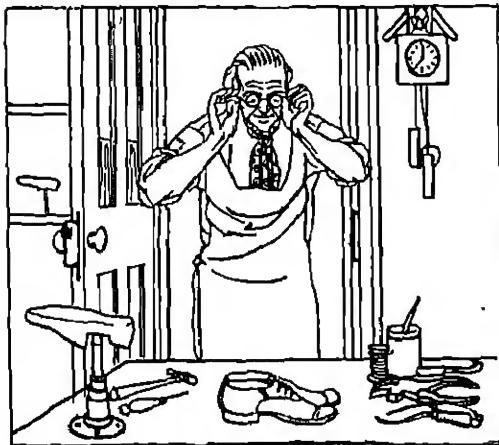


FIG. 34  
*The Surprise*

hesitation and perplexity of the man, connected with the scarcity of the material for work.

*Picture 2. The Shoemaker's Surprise.* In Fig. 34 the children may discover—

The hour is 7 a.m., and again the cuckoo calls; the shop is all in order for the day's work; the shoemaker enters ready dressed for work, to find his customer's order already carried out.

The children may express in words the emotion experienced by the shoemaker at this amazing sight, for this can be gained from a close study of his features and the action of his hands. He adjusts his spectacles because he cannot believe his eyes.

This picture offers no solution of the mystery, so the children pass on to the next.

*Picture 3. The Mystery Increases.* The children's observations should be concerned with

the number of shoes, the time of the clock, the emotion shown by the two figures (Fig. 35).

The difference in the time of day is sufficient

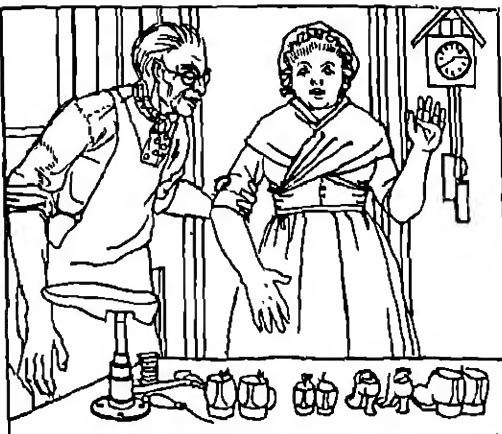


FIG. 35  
*The Mystery Increases*

to suggest reasonably that it is not the same morning as that shown in the previous picture.

The children will be able to deduce that the shoemaker came first, and finding the work

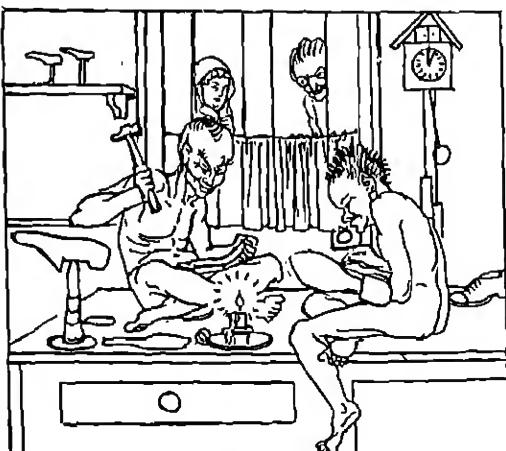


FIG. 36  
*The Secret*

finished for his four customers he hastened to bring his wife to share his amazement. His eagerness is made clear by his grasp on his wife's arm, while her surprise is shown by the actions of her hands.

At this point of the lesson the children will be ready to draw upon their imagination to suggest what magic may have taken place.

*Picture 4. The Secret.* This picture (Fig. 36) will answer the queries raised by the class in its imaginative contribution. It is very straightforward. The main points to be noticed will be—

The occupation of the elves; their nakedness; the time of day; the peering faces of the shoemaker and his wife.

*Picture 5. The Reward.* It is hardly possible for the children to anticipate through Picture 4

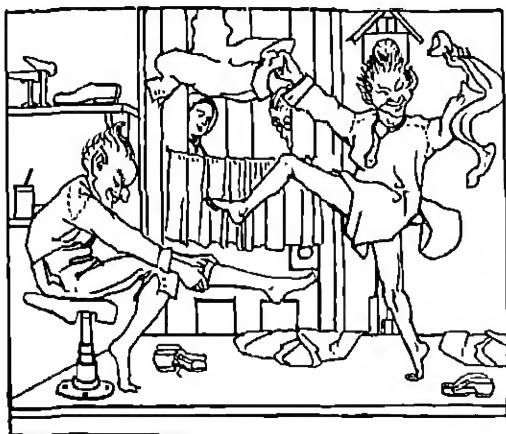


FIG. 37  
*The Reward*

what Picture 5 will give. Their work lies in supplying the missing link after Picture 5 (Fig. 37) has been carefully observed.

The elves are already partly dressed, and the glee with which one draws on his stocking while the other dances with delight over his new possessions will suggest that they are unexpected treasures. The figures of the shoemaker and his wife hovering in the background may suggest some explanation of the event. It is for the children to imagine what exactly has happened, and to fit their ideas into the story as it unfolds.

### *Development of Stage II*

It is suggested that individual work should follow as outlined after Stage I, but with one

difference. Each child might now begin to try to make a diagram for himself, and fit the story to it without the teacher's guidance.

It may be added here, just as a suggestion, that the treatment of this series of pictures in Stage II could form the preliminary step in the making of a play.

### *Stage III*

The aim of the third stage is to give more scope for original composition in the building of the story. The contribution from the class will be entirely the children's own work, but should be of such a nature that it will, of its own accord, fall into its right place in the story, so that the pattern of the story may be preserved.

The problem of Stage III is to find an end for the story. The children should not give a tame conclusion, but should pick up the story in the very climax itself and then finish it. This exercise shows a marked advance from the starting point of this short course in story building.

### *The Polar Bear*

*Picture 1. The Start.* Close observation on the children's part will be necessary before they can set the story going. The turn of the head

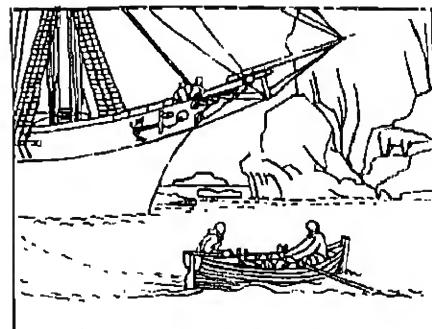


FIG. 38  
*The Start*

in the man who steers the small boat suggests a connection between the occupants of the rowing boat and the men on the big ship. The polar bear in the background provides a motive for the visit to the ice-bound island.

*Picture 2. The Chase.* The children should read this picture through their observation of the position of the bear, the prints of its feet, and the emotional reaction of the hunters at the sight of them. The feeling and desires of the



FIG. 39  
*The Chase*

men are brought out not only through facial expression but also through bodily attitude. The tilt of the head, the hands, the feet, and the bend of the body should all be noticed.

After this careful study the children may try to anticipate the next link in the story before they see Picture 3.



FIG. 40  
*The Halt*

*Picture 3. The Halt.* When the third picture (Fig. 40) is shown, it will be seen that there is a good deal to think about before the children can look back and fill in the details of the event which has taken place between the incidents shown in Pictures 2 and 3 (Figs. 39 and 40). The children have gradually to learn to read

the message of a picture through the emotion which it expresses, and here this is strongly marked. One man wipes his brow as after some very strenuous exercise, while the other is too exhausted to make any effort whatever. Exhaustion is clearly shown by the relaxation of the limbs which is evident in the position of his head, droop of the shoulders, limpness of the hands, and general inertness of legs and feet.

The ship meanwhile waits, but now it is seen in the background in place of the foreground, which will help the children to picture the chase which has taken place round and round the rock.

Behind the rock, and unknown to the men, the bear's attitude suggests its next move.



FIG. 41  
*The Meeting*

*Picture 4. The Meeting.* This picture (Fig. 41) will give the children a surprise that will delight them. They will observe that the emotion shown by the men is entirely changed, and the whole facial expression and bodily attitude have altered. Surprise and consternation are uppermost—these may at any moment give place to fear. The expression of the bear is also worthy of study.

In putting this picture into words it is not enough at this stage that the children should describe only what is happening. The *feelings* of both men and bear should be verbally expressed, and at some length. The emotional expression of the picture is definitely shown, and this is necessary if children are successfully to enter into the emotional aspect of the story, and

be able to express the result in words both clearly and vividly.

### *The End of the Story*

The problem of Stage III now remains for the children to solve. It will be their work to pick up the story and complete it for themselves in any way they may prefer. The title of the concluding section might well be "The Escape." Perhaps some of the class will like to provide an illustration as well as a picture in words, and so complete this series.

It may interest readers to know that the incident illustrated here is a true one. It happened to a man who joined Sir John Franklin's expeditions to the Arctic Regions. He used to tell the story when he was an old man, and he always ended it with the statement that he was so much afraid that his hair stood on end "like a pot of crocuses."

Individual work can follow Stage III on much

the same lines as those followed at the end of Stage II, but the written work, whether on this series of pictures or some other, should show appreciation of the emotional side of the story to a fuller extent than previously.

### *Suggestion for a Further Stage*

Story building can be carried to a further stage of development by the provision of story material providing no hint of a climax: this would be left entirely to the child's invention.

This course of lessons is not suggested for the children as an alternative to free work in story writing, but rather as a preparation for it. From this graduated training it is hoped that the children's free stories will benefit, especially in the matter of form.

The age of the children who can do this type of work is left to the teacher, as children of the same age vary in ability for very many reasons.

## STORIES TO TELL

The Junior age covers a span of time during which a striking note in the development of the child's nature is his desire for adventure. He wants it in his own activities, and he wants it in the stories that he reads and to which he listens.

He is emerging from a period in which the imaginative mind of the average child questioned little and placed no limits on the unconventional. He now approaches a further stage in his development. His nature requires different food, and his interests demand a different outlet. Gradually he reacts more and more toward material which offers him an acquaintance with adventurous deeds—the type of adventure changing as he advances in mind.

It is not the supply of such material that creates his demand, but rather his natural development of mind and nature which demands the supply, and if his need is not met he will find a means of satisfying it for himself, and not always with material of the right kind.

In the early stages of the Junior course, when the majority of children are leaving the fairy tale period behind them, the child craves for

quite simple stories of adventure. These may still be dominated by the unconventional and the unlikely, but should also touch a new form of realism and contain definite incidents which to the child will appear in the light of adventure.

As the child's mind develops a little further there comes to mingle with this desire for incidents of adventure an interest and admiration for the person who carries out the adventure, in addition to the adventure itself.

When the child reaches this stage the time has come for the presentation of stories which introduce him to those figures which are worthy of his admiration.

Deeds of high adventure which surround a central heroic figure provide what his nature demands, and for which his mind is ready. These heroic figures will stimulate his imagination and arouse his feeling so that he will desire to put himself in the same place—a fact which should influence the teacher in the choice of the material.

There are many stories of everyday life, in which a central figure faces grave odds with a brave heart and surmounts obstacles, which

will arouse the children's sympathy and meet with understanding; they will be an inspiration to the children if presented when this stage of their mental development is reached.

Material abounds on every hand. Folklore offers many thrilling stories with broad, simple incidents that the children can follow. Legend, history, and ordinary everyday life will yield treasures in response to those who seek.

The stories of adventure in this section illustrate these facts. "The Pedlar of Swaffham" is an old folklore tale to be found in many variations up and down the country. Legend is mainly responsible for the incidents in the stories of St. Andrew, St. Patrick, and St. David. The tale of Grizel Cochrane is authenticated history, while "The Broom Merchant" (re-told from Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera*) shows quite a different form of heroic character.

It happens that five out of the six stories are definitely stories for boys, while the fifth, that of Grizel Cochrane, will be welcomed by them. This selection will be found to be equally acceptable to girls, for they, too, are passing through the "hero-worship" period, and it is the heroic deeds to which they react rather than to the sex of the hero.

A story appeals to children over and above everything else, and through it one reaches not only their minds but also their hearts. Because of its appeal it will claim their attention, and consequently it is likely to be remembered—hence it is important to put what is most worth remembering into story form.

### Further Suggestions

The following short list of ideas for further stories is taken from *A Guide to Story Telling*, by Arthur Burrell.

1. There were certain men who wished to sail on dry land, and they set their sails in the wind and sailed away over great fields. Then they sailed over a high mountain and there they were miserably drowned. A crab was chasing a hare which was running away at full speed, and high up on the roof lay a cow which had climbed up there. In that country the flies are as big as goats are here. Open the window that the flies may fly out.

2. A fool dressed in a new tunic cannot recognize himself in the glass. So, when Homer is refused an audience of the king on account of his clothes, he goes and puts on fresh robes, is heard, and then takes the clothes off and bows to them for having obtained an audience for him.

3. A knight who can cut a horseshoe in two with his sword lends the sword to another who cannot even cut a nail. He explains that though he lent the sword he cannot lend his arm.



4. A man left an ass for the use of his three sons, in turn, day by day; each of them trusts to his brothers to feed it.

5. A man left his estate to the laziest of his three sons. When each had asserted his superlative laziness, it was announced that he had disinherited them all.

6. One of the celebrated Gotham men bought a trivet in the market and carried it home. Becoming tired of carrying it, he put it down and said, "You have three legs and I two; stand still if thou wilt, and follow me if thou wilt. I will tell thee the right way to my home."

7. The Schildburg men, who correspond with the men of Gotham, once built a council-house without windows. They first brought in torches; next they carried in sunlight (in tilts), then they took off the roof; but at last one saw some light through a crevice, and they decided to make windows.

8. When Catana was destroyed by Etna, two sons took their father and mother on their backs and fled. People say that the flames divided to let the boys pass.

The teacher who is practised in story telling will not find it difficult to expand 2-8 into good stories. All of this group demand a fairly high standard of appreciation, and should therefore be introduced only to the top class of the Junior School.

## THE PEDLAR OF SWAFFHAM

John Chapman, the Pedlar of Swaffham, lived in a little house with a garden. A green fence stood round it. An apple tree grew at its gate, while behind it there was an orchard, on the edge of which lay a deep well.

One night the Pedlar had a dream. He dreamed that a voice told him to go to London. On London Bridge he would meet a man who would tell him good news. At first the Pedlar took no notice of the dream, but when it came again twice, and even three times, he was very puzzled in his mind. He could get no rest till he decided to set forth on his journey.

When he reached London Bridge he spent many hours looking about him, but he neither saw nor heard anything that could be the good news promised.

At last a Shopkeeper hard by, who had been watching him for some time, noticed that he neither sold any wares nor asked for any alms. The man left his shop door and begged to know what the Pedlar wanted.

"You may well ask me," said the Pedlar, "for truly I have come hither upon a very vain errand." He then told the Shopkeeper the story of his dream with its promise of good news.

The Shopkeeper laughed heartily. "Alas! good friend," he said, "if I had heeded dreams I might have proved myself as very a fool as thou hast. 'Tis not long since I dreamt that I was at Swaffham in Norfolk, a place utterly unknown to me. There lived one, John Chapman, a Pedlar. Beside his house, near the orchard, I saw a tree near a well, and I dreamed

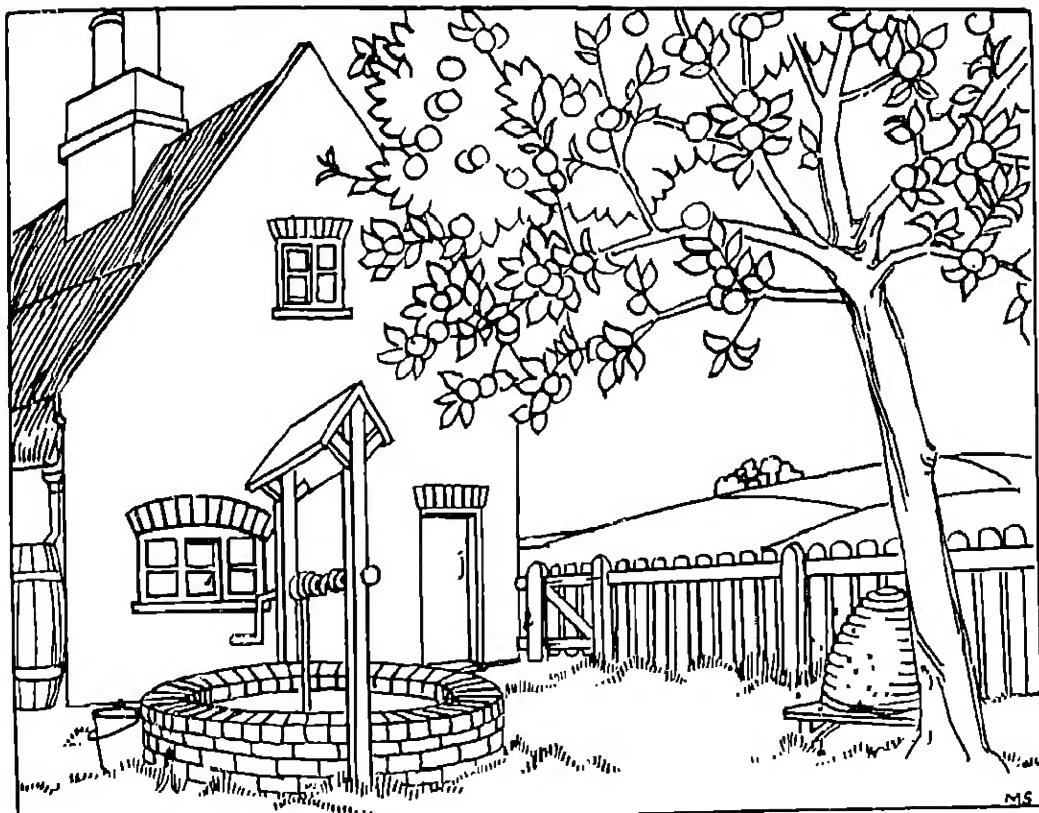


FIG. 42  
*The Pedlar's House*

that if I digged there I should find a vast treasure. Now think you that I am such a fool as to take a long journey to find hidden treasure which only belongs to a dream? No, no, honest countryman, I am wiser. Therefore, good fellow! learn wisdom of me and get you home and mind your business."

The Pedlar listened to the end of the Shopkeeper's story, and then cunningly replied—

"Yes, verily I will return home and follow my business, not heeding such dreams henceforward."

On reaching home the Pedlar took his spade and chose a spot in his orchard under the tree and near the well. He began to dig. He had not digged very deeply before he came to something hard. His excitement grew intense. Digging harder still, he presently discovered a large earthen pot, which he carried into his house. He found that it was full of golden coins. These he prudently hid, and said nothing to his neighbours.

The pot had a lid, upon which was an inscription written in Latin, but this the Pedlar could not read. He decided to place this lid among his things for sale. Shortly after, some youths

came that way and stopped to look at his wares. They began to talk about the words upon the lid. The Pedlar listened, and heard them turn the sentence into English.

*Under me doth lie  
Another much richer than I.*

The Pedlar said nothing, but he made haste into his orchard, and dug deeper in the same spot as before. He found another and a bigger pot, as the inscription said. This he found to contain even more gold than the first pot.

The Pedlar was now a rich man, but he did not keep all his wealth for himself. Swaffham Church had largely fallen down, and no one was rich enough to build it up again. The Pedlar decided to do this work himself. He put on workmen, at his own charges, to re-build the Church, and they made it once more safe and sound.

For long afterwards this act was remembered by the people of Swaffham. In the Church they placed a statue of the Pedlar of Swaffham. It was cut in stone and showed his pack on his back and his dog at his heels.

To this day if you go to Swaffham you will see the "Pedlar's Seat" in the aisle of the Church.

## THE PATRON SAINTS OF ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, IRELAND, AND WALES

The flag of the Union Jack is a familiar sight to every British child. The question must often arise as to the meaning of its design and colour. Is there a reason why our national flag should be made of three separate flags? To answer this natural question one has to turn to history, to legend, and to tradition.

Each of the three flags represents a separate nation—the flag of St. George for the English, that of St. Andrew for the Scottish, and that of St. Patrick for the Irish.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century, James King of Scotland became also King of England. The difficulty then arose as to which flag should be flown on the King's ships.

The English flag of St. George was a plain red cross on a white ground, while the Scottish flag of St. Andrew was a diagonal white cross

on a blue ground. It was decided to place the red cross of St. George on the white cross of St. Andrew, and so form a flag common to both countries—hence the name "union flag."

In the beginning of the nineteenth century the Irish Parliament was joined to that of England and Scotland, the cross of St. Patrick was added to the other national crosses, and the now familiar Union Jack was formed. The cross of St. Patrick was a red diagonal cross on a white ground. The three crosses can be clearly traced in our Union Jack.

The flag of the Union Jack is a reminder of three men who were brave and good, and who were so much revered that they were chosen to be the Patron Saints of England, of Scotland, and of Ireland. Many stories have collected round their names, and in some these men are

represented as knights who, being both brave and true, went forth as champions of Christendom to fight against wrong.

There are occasions in school life, such as certain festival days, when one's eye turns naturally toward the British flag, and the children will like to hear the stories which the sight of the flag brings to one's mind.

*The Story of St. George* is told on page 133.

### 1. *The Story of St. Andrew*

St. Andrew was an apostle of Our Lord Jesus Christ. His father was a fisherman, Jonas by name, and his brother was Simon Peter. His name does not often appear in the story of the New Testament, and when it does it is only a glimpse of him that is gained. Yet each time something is learnt of his nature, and each time it is shown to be a kindly one.

Whenever St. Andrew flits across our sight, it is because he is thinking of others, and bringing them into notice. At one time it is his brother Peter whom he brings to Jesus, while at another the Greeks approach him to gain his sympathetic help, when they are seeking to be brought into the presence of Christ.

Like a flashlight picture he is seen at the feeding of the five thousand, when, true to his kindly nature, it is Andrew who points out the lad with the five barley loaves and two small fishes.

Around the idea of St. Andrew's kindness many stories have grown. Tradition tells us that after the death of Jesus the Apostle Andrew wandered through Asia Minor to tell the people of His life. Passing along the Black Sea he came into Europe, and there had many strange adventures. In some of these stories he is represented as a brave knight.

One of these stories which comes to us out of that long ago time sounds almost like a fairy tale, but it gives us a true picture of St. Andrew in so far as it shows yet once again that he thought first of others, and tried to bring them to a state of happiness.

St. Andrew journeyed from the country of Asia Minor into Europe to the land of Thracia.

Thracia was a land of much beauty, with fair woods and great forests through which St.

Andrew travelled for many days. He had little rest or sleep, but at last he came to the foot of the mountain, on top of which stood a great castle.

St. Andrew prepared to climb the rocky crags, but when he looked up at the great castle towering above him he wondered what adventures might await him there. He buckled his armour closer, grasped his sword in his hand, and began to climb.

On nearing the great gate he was amazed to come across the body of a huge giant lying upon a rock. He approached cautiously, only to find that the giant was dead. Much puzzled, St. Andrew pressed on to the gate, which, to his surprise, he found to be open, and to have no apparent means of defence.

Sword in hand, he slipped within the gate, expecting every moment to meet some fierce encounter from a knight of the castle. But no such thing happened—not a sign of any defender was to be seen.

With a wary step, St. Andrew looked about him, penetrating farther and farther into the castle but finding no one. At last he was attracted by sounds, and, turning a corner, suddenly came upon the Thracians offering their daily prayers to the gods they worshipped—to the sun, to the moon, and to certain of the other great planets.

The King of Thracia sat with his subjects around him, and prayed to the gods as the daily sacrifice was offered, yet there was no joy but only sorrow in the King's heart and in those of his people. All Thracia mourned and wept.

St. Andrew turned to the King, and, looking upon him with a heart full of sympathy, begged to know the cause of so much sorrow.

The King, weeping bitterly, told how the land through which St. Andrew had travelled had been ravaged by an evil giant. This giant had done many cruel deeds, and last of all he had determined to destroy the six beautiful young princesses who were the King's daughters. The King had implored help from the gods, who undertook to protect the princesses by changing them into swans.

As the King finished speaking, he beckoned St. Andrew toward the river. There he saw

six milk-white swans, each with a crown of gold.

"These are my six daughters," said the King. "The cruel giant is now dead, but the princesses still lie under the spell which the gods cast over them. Seven long years have come and gone, and each day I and my knights burn the perfumed incense with the sweet frankincense of Arabia as a sacrifice to our gods. In vain we pray that my six daughters may be restored to their human shape. For their sakes I have left my palace, and I will spend all my remaining days here by the banks of this unhappy river."

The heart of St. Andrew was moved with pity. "Most noble king," said he, "your words bring sadness to my heart, and compel my very soul to feel sorrow at your daughters' miseries. But, as I look around me, I see the cause of a yet greater grief and deeper sorrow. Since my first arrival into this same castle I only see the vain worshipping of strange gods. If you seek to recover your daughters' happiness by humble prayers, it is the Christian God to whom you must turn. He is the God of wonders."

"I am a Christian knight, and in the honour of Christendom I challenge your proudest knights at arms, against whom I will maintain that our God is the true God."

The King accepted the challenge, and agreed that his knights should be ready to fight on the morrow.

St. Andrew spent the night in prayer to God to prepare himself for the task that lay before him, and when dawn came he entered the lists bearing his colours on his breast—a silver cross set in blue silk.

As the fight began, St. Andrew prayed to God for strength that he might show the King and his knights that the Christian God was the true God, and that He only should be worshipped.

The contest was fierce and long, lasting until St. Andrew dealt such severe blows with his battle axe that the knights begged for mercy. The King promised that, if their lives might be spared, he and his subjects would accept the Christian faith and worship the God of the Christians as the one true God.

No sooner was the promise made than the King looked up and beheld his six daughters

coming toward him full of gaiety and gladness, looking more beautiful than ever before.

The King's heart was now full of joy—he bade farewell to his long continued sorrows, promising that ever after he would be a true Christian.

All the King's household were full of delight when they were bidden to make ready to leave the grim castle and return to the King's palace. When morning came, they marched gaily away with banners streaming in the wind, while drums and trumpets made joyful melody.

The last story of St. Andrew tells of his death, and how he came to be called the patron saint of Scotland.

In the course of his wanderings St. Andrew came to preach at Patreas in the country of Achaea. At this time the country was governed by a pro-consul named Aegeas. One story tells us that Maximila the wife of Aegeas also came to Patreas, where she heard St. Andrew preach, and, together with many others in the town, determined to pray only to the Christian God and worship the pagan gods no more.

When Aegeas heard this he was very angry, and threatened to punish all the people who continued to pray to the Christian God.

St. Andrew, who had no fear, appeared before him and spoke long to him, trying to persuade him to pray to the true God, and to destroy those gods that were false. But Aegeas refused to listen, and commanded St. Andrew to make a sacrifice to the pagan gods or he would order him to suffer death.

Upon hearing this, St. Andrew replied that he would make a sacrifice every day, but only to the true God whom he worshipped. When Aegeas heard these words he gave the order that St. Andrew should die, and that his death should be upon a cross.

St. Andrew was not afraid to die. When he heard of the manner of his death he was full of joy that it should have been chosen for him to die in the same way as his Lord, Jesus Christ.'

On the day of his death, as he came within sight of the cross, he raised his hands toward it and said, "Hail, precious cross! I come to thee, receive me with joy into thine arms. Take me from among men and present me to my Master."

After his death, St. Andrew's body was cared

for by a Christian lady, Maximila, who buried it in a beautiful sepulchre near her home. She was perhaps that very Maximila who was the wife of Aegeas.

Long years after, it came to pass that the relics of St. Andrew were in the guardianship of a monk named Regulus. One night he had a dream. An angel appeared to him and bade him take some of these precious relics and travel westward to a place which the angel would show him.

For a long time Regulus journeyed, until at length he reached the East Coast of Scotland, when the angel once more appeared and bade him bury his precious burden. A church was built over the relics, where now there stands the city of St. Andrews.

Regulus remained in Scotland and became a missionary to the Picts and Scots, many of whom became Christians. They were a warlike people and fought many battles. One night they were making ready to fight against the Saxons, when it is said that a diagonal cross was seen to appear in the sky. When morning came they defeated their enemy, and many of them thought that St. Andrew had helped them to win the victory.

To show their gratitude and to offer their thanks by prayer, some of the warriors walked barefoot to the city of St. Andrews. This happened about 1200 years ago, but ever since that day St. Andrew has been the national saint of Scotland.

## 2. The Story of St. Patrick

It is suggested that the following group of stories of St. Patrick should form the material not for one lesson, but for a short course of lessons, with some additional time for the children to learn the hymn of "St. Patrick's Breastplate."

The stories about St. Patrick are a mixture of history and legend. Shortly before his death he wrote his *Confession* as a way by which he could express his thanks to God for all His mercies to himself and to the Irish people. From this book it has been possible to glean some of the facts of his life.

Legend differs as regards his birthplace, it having been ascribed to Cornwall, Wales, West-

ern Scotland, and the North of France. In the story that follows it has been ascribed to the North of France, thus following the *Confession*.

### Childhood and Youth

Many hundreds of years ago the people of Gaul were ruled by the Romans.

On the North Coast of that country there was a little town which the Romans called Bonavem, meaning "the headland above the river," but on the map to-day it is named Boulogne-sur-Mer. Its name exactly described its position, for the town was built on the high cliff overlooking the spot where the river emptied itself into the sea.

Not far from the little town, and on the bank of the river, there lived a farmer named Calpurnius and his wife Conchessa with their only child, Patrick.

Patrick's parents were of the Christian faith, and as a boy he had heard about God's love, but he paid little heed to this teaching. He liked better to roam with his boy friends than to listen to his mother's wise counsels. So he grew up through boyhood with a careless feeling about the religion of his parents.

In those days the more westerly parts of Britain were tracts of wild country ruled over by pirate kings. It was no uncommon thing for such kings to plan raids on the coast of Gaul, and to carry off such boys and girls as they could capture to be sold as slaves.

One day, when Patrick was about 16 years of age, a big ship came from the country of Ireland. It was manned by a crew of wild and fierce men, who were fully armed. Without warning, they sailed up the mouth of the river, rushed up the beach, and raided the town of Bonavem. They pillaged and slew without mercy, and choosing the youngest and best of the boys and girls they bound them and carried them away to the ship and prepared to set sail once more. Among these captives was Patrick.

The pirate chief cared nothing for the cries and struggles of his human cargo. Oars were grasped by the brawny arms of the rowers, the head of the ship was turned toward the open sea, and as sorrowing fathers and mothers watched from the headland the cries of their children

became fainter as the sail of the pirate ship disappeared from sight.

After some days the ship landed on the coast of Ireland and Patrick became the slave of an Irish master in the county of Antrim.

It was a wild, rough country of brown bog, and Patrick spent all his days out on the hillsides tending his master's cattle. Each day was long and lonely, for he rose before daylight and not even in snow, frost, or rain was he permitted to leave his work until the cattle were safely housed for the night.

As the lonely days went by, Patrick often thought of his home in Gaul. He longed to see his father and mother again, but day and night he was alone with seldom a living creature to speak to except the animals which he tended.

As he thought of his mother he began to think of his mother's God, and of what she had taught him of God's love and care. And so little by little he learnt to talk to God, and to listen to God's voice speaking to his heart, until he felt the joy of knowing that God loved him.

Often Patrick would talk to God while he looked after the cattle, and sometimes he would rise in the night and go out into the woods or up the mountainside to pray. He thanked God that his eyes had been opened so that he could see the wondrous things of God's law.

One night, when he had been six years with his master, he heard a voice in his dream. It said, "Thou shalt soon return to thy country."

Patrick wondered what it could mean and how he could possibly reach his own country when it was across the sea. But soon there came a night when the voice spoke again: "Behold! a ship is prepared." Then Patrick was sure that it was the voice of God, and he made ready to obey it.

Trusting in God to help him, he escaped from his master and set forth on his journey. He had many miles of country to cross before he could reach the coast. There were hills to climb, rivers to ford, and bogs to traverse, yet he tramped on, always feeling that this was what God wanted him to do. Often he was hungry, for except when he met kind people who gave him food, he had only the wild fruit to eat and water to drink.

But at last he saw the sea stretching before

him, and knew the first part of his journey was safely over.

He found a ship making ready to start and asked for a passage. When the merchant master of the vessel found he had no money, and could only offer to work, he was very angry, and refused to let him set foot on board his ship.

Patrick turned away, perplexed for a moment as to what he should do next. Then, stepping aside, he entered a little hut and knelt down to pray. But before he had come to the end of his prayer, one of the sailors came to look for him. "Come," he said, "they are asking for thee; the Captain has changed his mind and will take thee on trust, hoping to get money for thy passage when we reach the land of Gaul."

With a thankful heart Patrick went joyfully on board, and the ship set sail. In about three days' time the coast of Gaul was sighted, but the place at which the ship landed was in Brittany, many miles from that part which the merchant and his company wished to reach. A long journey was still before them, and the country to be crossed was so desolate that by and by Patrick and his fellow travellers had eaten all the food that they had, and they could find no more. It seemed as if they must die of starvation.

The master of the company, having seen Patrick often at prayer, appealed to him for help. "You call yourself a Christian," said he, "and you say that your God can do everything—ask him to help us now and give us food."

Patrick replied that if they were ready to believe that God would help them, he would pray to Him and ask Him. And, as Patrick prayed, they heard the sound of crashing branches, and through the bushes near at hand there suddenly appeared a drove of wild pigs. The travellers chased and killed many of them; after halting for two days to rest and refresh themselves, they gave thanks to the God of Patrick for all His goodness, and set off once more on their journey.

At last Patrick, now a youth of 22 years, saw his home once more, and was welcomed by his kinsmen.

They listened with interest to the many stories which Patrick told them of his life in the wild country of Ireland, and rejoiced to hear of God's great mercy to him.

*The Return to Ireland*

Patrick's friends wanted him to remain with them for always, but he could not forget the poor people of the country of Ireland, most of whom had never heard of God and His love.

One night he had a vision. He saw a man coming toward him carrying a letter in his hand. When the man was quite close to him Patrick saw that the letter began with the words "The voice of the Irish." As the dream continued, he thought he heard the cry of many voices coming from one of the Irish forests. The words came clear—"We entreat thee, O holy boy, come and walk once more in our midst."

When Patrick awoke he was greatly troubled in his mind. He felt sure that God wanted him to leave Gaul and go back to Ireland, to teach the people of that wild country about His love and care.

After much thought and prayer, Patrick made up his mind to accept this work as his, and to prepare himself for it. He felt he had much to learn first before he was fit to teach others, so he decided to leave his home and his kinsfolk and spend the next few years in study.

Patrick travelled from one place to another to learn of holy things, until at last he was ordained a priest; then he felt ready to leave Gaul and go as a missionary to the land of Ireland.

Although it was many years since he had left Ireland he remembered it well. He knew that when he reached it he would meet with grave dangers and many difficulties. Though some men might be willing to listen to his preaching, many would refuse.

It was a land of mountains and wide plains, with rivers difficult to cross. The people were warlike and often savage, though Patrick felt that their hearts might be won by kindness.

Few of the Irish knew anything about God's love—they said their prayers to the sun and to the moon. They thought that there were gods in the trees and in the mountains, and these gods they called spirits, and because they feared the spirits and thought it would please them, they often did cruel things.

The priests who taught the Irish people their religion were called "Druids." They told the

people that it was right to kill human beings and to offer them as sacrifices to the gods, and that the gods would be pleased. And sometimes they would put people into a huge wicker cage and set fire to it. It was the chief priest of the Druids who held the torch and set the cage on fire.

These terrible things took place when the Druid priests held a service. They had no churches, but they used to meet the people in the forests where the oak trees grew.

The oak tree was held to be most sacred, and also the mistletoe which grew upon it. The priest used to tell the people that mistletoe was a gift from heaven: it could heal all their diseases, and wherever it was found it was a sign that the gods were present.

At the beginning of each month, when the moon was young, a service was held in the forest where the oak trees grew. The chief Druid wore a long white robe and a garland of oak leaves round his head, and carried a golden sickle in his hand. The people used to watch in silence until, with his golden sickle, the priest cut a branch of the mysterious mistletoe plant, and at this sign they burst forth into prayer to their gods.

The Druids had a great deal of power over the people; even the Kings obeyed them. There were many kings and chiefs in Ireland, but there was one king who was over all the rest. Patrick knew that if he wanted to win over the people he must first move the hearts of their chiefs and kings.

Patrick set sail from Gaul accompanied by a band of men who were going to help him to carry out his work. They landed on the coast of Ireland in the county of Down. They were seen by a herdsman, who, thinking they were a band of robbers, ran to the lord of the district to tell him the news.

Dichu, the lord, gave orders that all his servants should arm immediately and hasten to the shore. When they reached it and looked for the enemy they saw Patrick and his companions coming peaceably up from their boat.

Dichu stopped and asked them their business, and was so impressed by the gentleness of their reply that he invited them to come to his house and there offered them hospitable entertainment.

Here Patrick and his companions stayed for some time and taught Dichu and all his household about God and His love for men, until Dichu and all his family promised to follow the Christian religion.

Patrick held services in the barn of Dichu, and later a little church was built there.

From this time onward, Patrick and his followers travelled up and down Ireland preaching to the people. Some listened to him gladly and asked him to tell them more about God's love, but others said they believed in the gods about whom the Druids taught.

### *St. Patrick and the Druids*

At last it came to the season of spring, and Easter time was at hand. It was Patrick's great desire to celebrate the Christian festival of Easter at Tara, where the head-king was wont to come. Thither Patrick went, and on Easter Eve arrived at Slane, not far distant from Tara itself.

It happened at that time of the year that all the princes and nobles of the kingdom met together under the chief king, Leoghaire, and his Queen, who came to watch the magic spells of the Druids and to hold a religious festival in honour of the sun god.

It was the custom every year that, for some days before this pagan festival took place, every fire should be put out, and that none should be relighted until the day of the festival.

By the King's orders any one who lit a fire, before the sacred flame of the fire on Tara was kindled, should surely die.

It was the eve of the spring festival. Twilight had settled over the great plain. All was quietness. All men watched and waited for the sign from Tara hill to show that the festival had begun, that the sacred flame was lit, and that all might rekindle their hearth fires from the sacred flame itself.

Suddenly, in the darkness, there shone out a flame of light. It came from the tent of Patrick. Consternation was in the hearts of the watching people. The King's command had been ignored. The sacred custom had been broken.

The Druids came hastening to the King, saying that unless this strange fire was quenched

that very night, it would overpower their fires and would never be put out at all, and the King would lose his kingdom.

The King at once took horse and galloped to Slane, followed by a crowd of people.

On reaching Patrick's tent he dismounted, seated himself, and ordered all his followers to do the same, and on no account to rise or make any sign of friendliness.

Patrick was summoned. No one dared to move save one little boy who, heedless of the King's words, jumped up, ran to Patrick, and clasped his arms around his knees. Patrick, looking down into the face of the child, raised his hand and blessed him.

The King looked curiously upon Patrick as he stood before him, and ordered that on the following day he should declare to him his reasons for coming to Ireland.

The Druids were much afraid that they might lose their followers if the King listened to Patrick's words, for they feared the power of Patrick's God.

There are many stories which tell of the ways by which the Druids tried to prevent Patrick from carrying out his work. One of the stories tells how the Druids, feeling sure that their magic spells were more wonderful than anything that Patrick could do, came to the King and suggested that Patrick should meet them next day on the plain, and each should show who could work the greater miracle.

The King agreed, and at their bidding he ordered a wooden hut to be built. Into one half of the hut a Druid wizard was to be placed, and in the other one of Patrick's followers, dressed in the wizard's coat. The hut was to be set on fire so that all could see whether Patrick's prayers to his God could save his companion.

The little house was built. The Druids, thinking to preserve the life of their own member, built one half of fresh green wood which would not kindle and the other half of dry wood which would burn with great ease.

In the half with the green wood the Druids placed the wizard, while Benignus, one of Patrick's companions, took his place in that part made with the dry wood.

The house was set alight. The flames rose high into the sky, but when at last they fell it

was found that the wizard had perished while Benignus escaped, only his wizard's coat being burnt to ashes.

Thus the plan of the Druid wizards failed.

King Leoghaire had been so impressed by the courage of Patrick that he ordered him to come the next day and preach to the assembled people.

So it came about that Patrick told the people why he had come to Ireland. He spoke to them of God the Father Who made the world and everything within it, of God the Son, Our Lord



FIG. 43  
*Patrick's Forbidden Fire*

Jesus Christ, Who had lived on earth, and of God the Holy Spirit, Who comforted the hearts of men. He was telling them of the Trinity, of how there was one God and yet God could be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Patrick looked round on the faces of the people as they listened, and wondered how he could make them understand just what he meant. And just as he wondered he looked down, and at his feet and all around him he saw the little green leaves of the shamrock. He felt that God was showing him how he could tell the people more plainly what he wanted them to understand. He picked a leaf and, showing it to them, said: "Here is a shamrock leaf. It is one leaf, but it has three parts. Yet though it has three parts, it is still one leaf. That is like the Christian God. We believe in one God, but in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit."

Leoghaire the King felt that Patrick and his companions were men of peace and goodness, and he made friends with them. Although he did not become a Christian himself, yet he allowed Patrick to travel up and down the country to preach to the people.

From that time onward Patrick and his followers went far and wide. They often made journeys on which they were faced by great dangers. They not only had to meet with cold and hunger and great weariness, but at times many enemies beset them, until their lives were in serious danger.

It was on such a journey that Patrick composed his beautiful hymn which he and his followers sang to remind themselves of the protection of God. It has been called "St. Patrick's Breastplate."

*I bind to myself this day  
The Power of God to guide me,  
The Might of God to withhold me,  
The Wisdom of God to teach me,  
The Eye of God to watch over me,  
The Ear of God to hear me,  
The Word of God to give me speech,  
The Hand of God to protect me,  
The Way of God to lie before me,  
The Shield of God to guard me,  
The Hosts of God to defend me  
Against anybody who would hurt me,  
Whether far or near,  
Whether alone or in company.*

*Christ be with me, Christ before me,  
Christ behind me, Christ within me,  
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ at my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ to command the fort,  
Christ to drive the chariot,  
Christ to steer the ship,  
Christ in the hearts of all who think of me,  
Christ in the words of all who speak to me,  
Christ in every eye that sees me,  
Christ in every ear that hears me.*

*I bind to myself this day  
A strong faith in the Trinity,  
The faith of the Three in One,  
The Creator of the World.*

Patrick lived in Ireland until he was a very old man, and before he died he had the joy of knowing that all over the land the Irish had heard of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is said that he died on the seventeenth of March, and in memory of the brave and good life that he lived that day is called Saint Patrick's Day. It is a custom honoured to-day by many people to wear a little bunch of shamrock leaves on this the day of St. Patrick.

### 3. *The Story of St. David*

The Union Jack flag is a reminder of three good men, the Patron Saints of England, Scotland, and Ireland, but the country of Wales also has its patron saint—St. David.

He lived a long time ago, and little is known of the actual facts of his history. He is thought to have been born about A.D. 446 at Mynyw, in Wales, a place which was later to be re-named St. David's, after the holy man himself.

His parents were Christians, and he was baptized as a baby. An old story is told about his baptism. A bishop having come to the neighbourhood, St. David's mother carried her young baby to him to be baptized. The Bishop was blind, but he took the child into his arms, prepared to carry out his work. Suddenly a stream of clear sparkling water gushed from the ground at his feet. When he heard the sound of the water, the Bishop stooped and dipped the child three times into it for he felt it must surely be a holy stream. The baby splashed his hands in the cool, clear water until the drops, thus sprinkled, fell on the blind eyes of the monk and his sight was immediately restored to him.

When the people saw what had happened, they began to praise God and to bless the young child. They felt he must indeed be a holy child if he could bring about so great a miracle.

When St. David was old enough, he was sent to study with a learned man named Paulinus, who gathered round him a group of boys who wanted to learn of those things which would best prepare them to be priests. Here St. David stayed for ten years, learning the Scriptures, until at last he was ordained a priest.

St. David made many journeys up and down the country. He was full of courage and ven-

tured forth without fear, like the knights of old. Perhaps that is why some of the old legends represent him as a knight going forth to war.

There is one story which tells of his journey to the kingdom of Tartary, in Asia. St. David arrived on the Emperor's birthday. It was the custom to hold a great tournament, to which came all the best and hardiest knights of the country. One knight was always chosen to be the Champion for the Emperor and to tilt against such other knights as entered the lists.

Now it chanced on this occasion that the choice fell upon St. David, and he was called forward to be the Champion of the day.

He was mounted on a fine Moorish horse with a richly embroidered livery, and on his shield was set a golden griffin in a field of blue. Against him came the Count, son of the Emperor. He was led on to the field by twelve knights, all richly dressed. They paced three times round the lists, passing before the Emperor and the many ladies of the Court, who were present to behold the honourable tournament.

The twelve knights then withdrew and St. David and the Count rode forth, and, facing one another, prepared to fight. At the sound of the trumpet they ran fiercely, each against the other. So terrible was the struggle that the ground seemed to shake, and the skies re-echoed the blows of the mighty strokes of their swords.

Three times they fought. At first it seemed as if St. David would suffer defeat, but at the third charge he fought with such valiance that both the Count and his horse were overthrown and slain.

The Emperor and his Court were so overcome with sorrow that the Emperor was tempted to avenge the death of his son by causing the death of the Champion Knight. Yet he knew that "it was against the Law of Arms, and a great dishonour to his country, to oppress by violence a strange knight, whose actions had ever been guided by the true honour." At last, a decision came into his mind.

"There was, adjoining the borders of Tartary, an enchanted garden, kept by Magic Art, from whence never any returned that attempted to enter." The governor of that garden was a famous wizard, named Ormondine. The garden was encompassed with a hedge of withered

thorns and briars which seemed continually to burn. On it sat curious shapes like night owls, while ravens croaked and clouds hung over all. Little flames of fire shot through the shrubbery upward to the sky.

The Enchanted Garden was in truth a fear some place, and to it the Emperor decided to send St. David with the promise that, if he could conquer the wizard who lived there, his life would be spared and he would be free to return to his home.

On hearing the Emperor's judgment, St. David travelled westward until he reached the edge of the Enchanted Garden. There he met so fearful a spectacle that his heart was struck with terror and he feared to go forward. He therefore knelt upon the ground and offered a prayer to God that his mind might not be oppressed with cowardice, nor his heart daunted with fear, till he had overcome the wizard to whom he had been sent. Then, with cheerful heart, he rose and went forward.

As St. David approached the gate of the Garden he came to a rock covered with moss. To his astonishment he found there a hilt of a sword the blade of which was embedded in the rock and held fast by magic art. The hilt was richly set with jewels of jasper and of sapphire, and about the pommel were engraven in letters of gold these words—

*My Magick spells remain most firmly bound,  
The world's strange wonder, unknown by anyone,  
Till that a Knight within the North be found,  
To pull this sword from out this Rock of stone :  
Then ends my charms, my Magick Arts and all,  
By whose strong hand, wise Ormondine must fall.*

When St. David read these words he wondered if he could be the Northern Knight who was to conquer the magician, and, putting out his hand, he tried to draw the sword from the rock.

No sooner did he touch the sword's hilt than all strength seemed to leave him and sleep overpowered him. The Magician knew well what had happened and he sent four spirits who carried the sleeping knight to a cave which was placed in the middle of the garden.

For seven years St. David slept, guarded by the spirits of Ormondine and soothed by sweet

music. It seemed as if his adventure had proved a failure. But help came in an unexpected way.

It happened that in the course of his adventures the knight St. George of England came to the land of Tartary and reached the Enchanted Garden. Here he espied Ormondine's sword enclosed in the magic rock. Having read the words engraven there, he put his hand to the sword and drew it forth as easily as though it had been fastened by a thread of silk.

Suddenly a mighty noise was heard. A voice of thunder spoke from the sky, there was a great crash of falling rocks, huge trees were torn up by the roots, the gates of the Enchanted Garden flew open and Ormondine the magician strode forth. With sparkling eyes and trembling hands, he rushed to St. George, and taking his hand he knelt and kissed it with great humility.

"Worthy knight," he cried, "whose adventures shall be known all the world over, my magic spells are ended. Thou hast broken them and at the same time made me free. It was my fate that I must remain here in this Enchanted Garden until, from the north, there came a knight that should pull the sword from the magic stone. This thou hast now happily performed. My unhappy life can now end."

Having spoken these words, the wizard gave a deep sigh and fell to the ground and died. At the same moment there was a terrible rattling in the skies and a groaning in the earth, and St. George looked to see the happening of some fearful thing but, instead, the Enchanted Garden appeared slowly to vanish from his sight. Looking down he beheld the figure of St. David, who suddenly opened his eyes and looked up into the face of his fellow knight.

Later, the stories tell of St. David living quietly in his own country of Wales. He built a little cell for himself in a lonely place, and used to go there to pray and to think. The river hard by provided him with drink, and he found his food in the meadows, where he gathered the wild meadow-leek. But there was other work for him to do. He founded a monastery at his native place, Mynyw, and it was soon filled with monks and disciples, who came to learn wisdom from St. David. They did many kinds of work—there were the fields to cultivate, and they often harnessed themselves to the plough

in place of oxen; they tended the bees so that they might have honey to give to the sick and the poor. A little story is told about the bees that lived at the monastery. A certain monk who tended them was about to set sail for Ireland. The bees discovered this, and, as they loved him dearly, they followed him aboard the ship. The monk then returned to the monastery and tried to slip away unobserved, but each time the bees found it out and pursued him as before. At last the monk "asked St. David's leave to take the bees with him, whereupon the Saint blessed the bees, and bade them depart in peace, and be fruitful and multiply

in their new home. Thus Ireland, where bees had hitherto been unable to live, was enriched by their honey."

St. David lived to be an old man, and was loved by all who knew him. When the time came for him to die, many came from far and near to bid him farewell. At last, one day, when the monks were singing their hymns of praise in the monastery chapel, St. David had a vision. He heard the sound of angels' voices, and he saw the figure of the Lord Jesus Christ. Full of happiness, he looked up into the face of his Lord, and saying, "Raise me after Thee," he breathed his last breath.

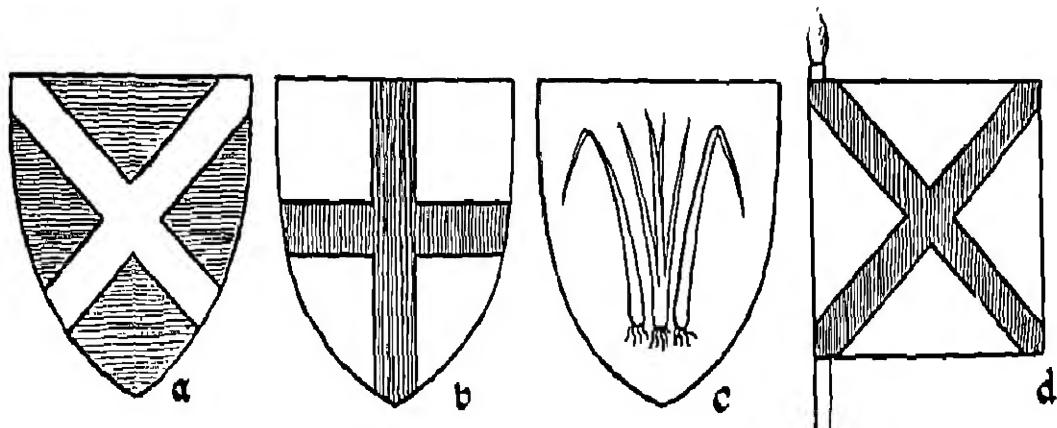


FIG. 44

*Flags and Emblems of Patron Saints*

(a) St. Andrew (Scotland), white on blue. (b) St. George (England), red on white.  
(c) St. David (Wales), green on white. (d) St. Patrick (Ireland), red on white.

## GRIZEL COCHRANE

### THE STORY OF A BRAVE DAUGHTER

When James II was King of England and Scotland, many people in Scotland were not happy under his rule. They rose against him, under the Duke of Argyll, because James wished to alter some of their laws and to make them worship God as he chose. One of the friends of the Duke of Argyll was a man named Sir John Cochrane, who lived at Ochiltree, a place not many miles from Edinburgh. When the Duke of Argyll was captured and imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle, a good many of his followers escaped to Holland, but Sir John was not one of these. He was captured, and was shut up during the long, hot summer of 1685, in the Old Tolbooth Prison in the Canongate, in Edinburgh.

The trial of Sir John was a sort of mock trial, and he was condemned to death and sent back to the Tolbooth, to wait for the coming of his death warrant from London. He would then be sent to the block and beheaded in one of the open spaces of Old Edinburgh. The Tolbooth was a dark, damp, grimy dungeon, and Sir John spent his days alone there, with nothing to hope for.

In the old country house at Ochiltree everybody was very unhappy when the bad news reached them that Sir John Cochrane would never come home again. He had several sons, and they begged that they might come and see their father in prison, but Sir John would not hear of such a thing. He said that if they came to the Tolbooth they might never get out again, and they were to keep away. But there was one girl at Ochiltree—her name was Grizel. She was a bright, bonnie, daring girl of eighteen. She could ride and fish and shoot and tramp like any modern schoolgirl. And her father loved Grizel very much, and longed to see her.

In those days girls were not expected to take any interest in big events, so Grizel went on horseback to see her father in prison in the Tolbooth whenever she liked. She appeared in that dark place like a flash of sunshine, and all the time she was planning in her own mind an escape for her father, though she said nothing about it.

Some of his friends thought they might buy a pardon for Sir John, but it took a long time to ride from Edinburgh to London, and time was short. Then King James might not be willing to grant a pardon *at once*. The days went on, Sir John had lost all hope, and the warrant for his death was expected from London any day.

One lovely morning when the sun was lighting up the grey Canongate and the grim Castle Crag, Grizel came riding slowly to the Tolbooth. The plan in her head was now complete, and her father was rather suspicious.

"Grizel," he said, "you have got something on your mind, lassie. I beg you to do nothing rash, *for my sake*. I command you not to put yourself in danger."

"Am I not a Cochrane, and your daughter?" cried Grizel proudly. "Father—go on hoping—next time you see me I shall have *news*."

"Grizel—take care of yourself"—Sir John did not dare to speak above a whisper, but his voice was hoarse. He was more afraid for his girl than for himself.

"A brave heart never falters. Fare thee well, father, until I come again," cried Grizel, with a cheery laugh, as she turned at the door of the cell to wave her hand.

Once outside the Tolbooth she trotted home deep in thought, taking no heed of any one as she jogged along the country lanes to Ochiltree.

When the August sun shone between the cornfields of the Border country next morning, a young girl dressed as a serving maid was riding toward England on horseback. This was Grizel, riding fast until she saw the River Tweed shining before her. She knew that a postman on horseback bringing His Majesty's mails was expected from Durham that day. He would carry her father's death warrant. She meant to take it from him.

Four miles from the Border Grizel drew up before a tiny white cottage, by the roadside. At once an elderly woman came out, dressed in a wide grey gown and a big white cap. She held up her hands in delight when she saw Grizel, for long ago she had been the girl's nurse.

"Hush, nurse, not a word!" said Grizel.

quickly jumping down. She led her horse to an old stable at the back and then came into the low, warm kitchen. It had a fire on the hearth, a box bed in a corner, a few pots and pans on a shelf, and a deep cupboard.

"And what brings ye, my bairn?" cried nurse.

"Bad news and good hope," said Grizel. "My father lies in prison in the Tolbooth. To-morrow his death warrant will reach Edinburgh unless I stop it. If you will help me, nurse, you will do a service to the house of Cochrane that they will never forget. I cannot trust or tell any one but you."

"Of course I will help you, bairnie," said the old nurse.

"I knew well that you would," said Grizel. "Listen then! It takes eight days to travel from London to Edinburgh. If I can steal my father's death warrant, that will put back his execution for sixteen days. This will give his friends a better chance to save him. I want a suit of your lad's clothes."

"Aye—aye," murmured the dame. She went to the big cupboard and took a suit belonging to her own lad. Without a word, Grizel put on the clothes, and they turned her into a handsome boy. With a quick smile for her nurse, she tossed her cloak round her shoulders, took her loaded pistols and thrust them into her belt, and was away on horseback. In the morning sunlight, her old nurse looked after her with anxious eyes.

"And how will the bonnie lassie return?" said the woman to herself, as she went back into her cottage and hid Grizel's clothes.

Grizel's heart was beating loudly when she drew up before a small, dingy, tumble-down inn at the edge of the village of Belmont. She looked round for a stable. No ostler appeared, so she put her horse into a dark shed, found him some hay, and then swaggered into the inn kitchen. The landlady was an old widow, but nobody was to be seen.

"Good dame—a meal?" Grizel called out.

The old woman saw a handsome lad when she hustled into the kitchen. She pointed to a meal spread on the table.

"Sit ye doon there," she said, pointing to the jug of ale and the cheese and scones. "That's the best I can offer ye. And be pleased my bonnie

man, to make no noise. There's a lad asleep in the bed yonder."

The widow pointed to the big bed built into the wall of the kitchen. It had a wooden door that was slightly open, but beyond the bed was dark. Grizel could not see the man who lay there, but she guessed it was the postman carrying her father's death warrant.

"Will ye bring me some water, Dame?" asked Grizel, lightly. "I cannot drink ale. I will pay ye for the fresh spring water."

"Hoots! Mph!" muttered the old woman. "A strange laddie who refuses good ale. Now mind yon pistols," she added, pointing to the postman's pistols which lay on the table. "For they're loaded, and might harm ye if ye touched 'em."

Grizel nodded, and the moment the woman was out of sight she crossed the room on tiptoe, and silently threw back the door of the box bed. Within lay a big red-haired man, deeply asleep, for he had ridden all night. As she looked at him Grizel's heart sank. His pillow was the mail bag. She could not rob it without waking the postman.

Grizel returned to the table. She stood and thought for two minutes, her eyes on the mud floor. Then, having glanced toward the bed, she took up the postman's pistols, drew out the shot, and laid them down again beside the jug of ale. When the widow returned from the spring Grizel threw her some money, and strode out to get her horse.

"I wonder how long you fellow will sleep," she said with a laugh, as she stole away.

Grizel chose a long, rough road, past a little, dark wood, with a steep bank that fell to open country. She rode slowly with a loose rein, listening all the time for the postman to come up behind her. The midday sun was hot and bright, the way was very lonely. It was at this moment that she had to fight down fear.

Hark! Clop-clop-clop—came the sound of a horse's hoofs. The postman was coming on his way to Edinburgh with the death warrant of Sir John Cochrane in his bag. Grizel turned idly in her saddle. She could see him clearly now as he topped a rise. In spite of his shaggy red hair he had a good-natured look. He hailed the bonnie lad and they rode on together.



FIG. 45  
*Grizel Lays the Pistols Down Again*

Side by side they rode for a mile. They came to a bend in the road, near a dense, dark wood. Suddenly Grizel came close to the postman, and spoke in a low clear voice, pistol in hand.

"Friend," she said, calmly, "I have a fancy for those mail bags you carry. Take my advice and give them up quietly and you shall go scot free."

The red-haired postman looked at the young lad in amazement.

"You had better obey me," said Grizel. "In that wood are stouter lads than me." She pointed to the dark trees with her whip. "Give me your bags and keep away from the wood until dusk, and save your skin."

The big postman burst into a roar of laughter.

"Ye're pleased to be merry, my young master," he said. "And I am no churl to take offence. But——"

He took up his pistol and pointed it at Grizel's head.

"I'm ready for ye," he said. "But I think, lad, that ye are more of an age to rob orchards than His Majesty's mails. I dinna want to shed yer blood."

"I am not fond of bloodshed either," said Grizel. "But I mean to have the mail."

With a quick hand she cocked her pistol close to the horseman's head. Raising his own, he pulled the trigger. Nothing happened, and the postman sprang from his horse in a rage. He made a dash for Grizel's bridle, but at a touch from her spurs her horse swerved. The girl seized the bridle of the postman's horse.

"Do not forget what I said about yon wood," cried Grizel, as she cantered away with both horses. In two minutes she was out of sight, leaving the red-haired postman more astounded than he had ever been in his adventurous life.

Grizel reached the wood by a roundabout road. She tied the horses to the nearest trees. It was the work of a moment to cut open the mail bags. Her fingers trembled and a mist came before her eyes as she tore open and threw aside packet after packet of important docu-

ments and letters. At last—at last—she found what she sought—a thick, sealed packet addressed to the Council in Edinburgh.

A sharp sound came from Grizel's lips. Without a pause she tore the warrant into tiny strips of paper, and thrust them into the bosom of her coat. But that was not all she did.

Other death warrants were in that bag—they also were torn into waste paper by the brave girl, and hidden about her before she thought of her own safe escape.

Then, having scattered the rest of the mail under the trees, she led her horse into a narrow lane, leaving the postman's horse tied to the tree. Carefully keeping to the by-lanes and fields, with her ears alert, Grizel rode across country and found her nurse on the watch for her.

"All's well, nurse," she cried as she appeared.

"The Good God be thanked," replied the Scotswoman, drawing her into the little cottage, where a good meal was ready. Before she drank the hot milk that stood on the hearth, Grizel threw into the blaze that roared up the wide chimney every bit of paper that had once been the death warrants. Behind the barred door and shuttered windows not a scrap remained to tell the tale. The lad's clothes, the cloak, and pistols were all well hidden in a place known to Grizel's nurse. Before dusk fell, the girl was riding home to Ochiltree, again dressed as a neat young serving maid.

When she saw the crag of Edinburgh Castle, next morning, on her way to visit her father, Grizel knew that she had saved him.

What became of the postman nobody knows, but the story of Grizel's adventure was kept a close secret at Ochiltree for a long time. Sir John's friends had time to save him. He could not be executed without a warrant, and five thousand pounds were promised to King James if Sir John Cochrane were set free. The next time a postman came with His Majesty's mails to Edinburgh, he brought a pardon for Grizel's father.

## THE BROOM MERCHANT

Hansli was a little Swiss boy who lived near the lake of Thun, with snow mountains above and wild flowers growing on their slopes. Hansli lived alone with his mother, for his father was dead. He had one elder sister, who had gone away to work on a poultry farm. He and his mother lodged in a small cottage that was joined to a big farmhouse which was built of beautiful brown wood, with a steep roof, and a balcony all round it.

Hansli's mother was very poor. She worked hard, and asked God to help her when she had no money. Her little son was a great comfort to her; he was always willing to chop wood and bring it in, or run to the well for water.

One day the farmer who owned the cottage said to Hansli—

"My lad, I think you are big enough and bright enough to earn some money for your mother."

"I do wish I could," said Hansli, "but I don't know how."

"Well, I know what you could do," said the farmer. "Go down to the stream on my land, where the willows grow, and cut *plenty* of twigs. I will show you how to make brooms of them, and you can pay me by making me two good brooms a year. Then go out and sell your brooms. Put all the good work into them that you can, and then people will know that you bring them good brooms, and they will trust you. Be sure that you put plenty of twigs into every broom you make."

"Oh, I'll do all that," Hansli cried out, and off he went to the willow trees. He cut a big bundle of twigs very carefully. The farmer was a good teacher, and Hansli was a bright boy who gave his mind to what he did. He could soon make brooms as well as anybody. The farmer was delighted.

"Keep on as well as that and you will do well, my lad," he said. "Don't be afraid to put plenty of twigs in, to bind your brooms well, or to spend a little extra time on them. Then people will believe in you as well as in your brooms, and you will soon have plenty of customers."

Every week Hansli carried his brooms to Berne market. At first the farmers' wives

hesitated to buy them. They said their own husbands could make brooms for them. But when Hansli came to their doors again and again, always with a smile, and an armful of good brooms, they began to look out for him, and they found that his brooms were always good. Hansli sold all his stock every week, and he would carry home for his mother some little present, perhaps a loaf of white bread. She often thanked God that she had such a good lad and such a warm home.

Soon Hansli began to find that it was hard work dragging so many brooms to market. Sometimes the miller carried a few for him, but what he really wanted now was a *cart of his own*.

"And alas, I haven't got enough money to buy one," sighed Hansli.

"Oh, you are a stupid lad," cried his friend the farmer. "I really thought you had more sense. Why don't you *make a cart*? You know how to cut wood. There is a lot of it on my land, and I will let you have some good wood very cheap. If you look well, you will find plenty of old iron in the lumber room. You must have some wheels, but you can pay the smith in brooms. Take courage, and your work is half done. Nobody with enough courage need ever be a beggar. If you work hard all the winter you will have a fine cart ready by the spring."

Hansli began to think about making a cart for himself. Then he began to try to do it, and found that he could. The farmer helped him a little, but he did most of it himself. When Easter came, to his joy and pride, he had as good a cart as any boy need wish for.

Off he went with his new cart full of brooms, to Berne. Everybody who knew him admired it. He told them all it was a good cart because he had made it himself. It was easy to push, except up-hill. One cook-maid, who always bought her brooms from Hansli, said that when she wanted a cart she would get him to make it. She was a good customer to the broom boy, and always when he sold her brooms Hansli gave her two little ones as a present. She used them for sweeping up the hearth.

Hansli loved his cart; it was like a friend, and he sold more and more brooms. Many a farmer

said to him, "When you want twigs, cut them from my willows, but don't damage the trees." Hansli always remembered this, and never hurt a tree. Indeed, the willow trees were like friends to him. He gave names to his favourite ones. He called them "Lizzie," "Little Mary-Anne," and "Rosie." They grew on the edges of streams running through such lovely Swiss meadows.

Of course, Hansli made brooms for the wives of these farmers for nothing, but they generally gave him white bread, or milk, freshly churned butter, and fruit to take home to his mother, in return. She saw that he had a good breakfast in the morning, and he had many nice meals in farm kitchens during the week.

Hansli and his mother now had good clothes, he bought fine tools, and kept them and himself clean and neat. He never forgot to say his prayers, and on Sunday he went to church with his mother, and read a chapter from the Bible to her. They added up the silver coins that Hansli had earned during the week, and thanked God that by good work they were getting on so well.

Yet sometimes Hansli had a bad day. He lost a customer, or nobody wanted new brooms, or the cooks were cross at the back doors of houses. Some of his brooms were very beautiful. Those were made from his favourite trees—Lizzie, Mary-Anne, Rosie. Sometimes Hansli found that thieves had been to these willow trees before him, and had torn down the branches, leaving jagged edges and broken boughs. This made Hansli angry as well as sad. He was a big lad now, but he was not tall. Still, he fought for his trees and punished the thieves. Sometimes he came home bleeding, and sometimes he had won the battle. Then his farmer friends cried out, "Bravo, little Tree Guard! Never mind, Hansli, next time we'll go with you and give the thieves a dance to cure them of their taste for brooms."

Time went on, and Hansli grew up to be a man. He was known all over the countryside between Thun and Berne as the Broom Merchant. One Tuesday he was going to market at Berne, with a tremendous cartload of his prettiest brooms from his favourite trees. It was a very hot day, and the cart was heavy.

Hansli often had to pause and wipe his brow as he dragged it up-hill.

"Oh, if I were only at the top!" he panted, as he paused near the little wood of Muri. Here stood a bench where women sometimes rested their baskets. On the bench sat a young girl with a bundle, and the girl was crying. Hansli being a kind-hearted young man asked her what was the matter.

"I have to go into Berne with this bundle of shoes," sobbed the girl. "My father is a shoemaker, and all his best customers are in the town. The gendarme (policeman) is new and cross, and he won't let me take them in. My father is very strict, and says I must not come home until I have sold the shoes in Berne, so I don't know what to do."

"This girl trusts me," said Hansli to himself. "I'll help you," he said to the girl. "Now give me your bundle. We'll hide it among the brooms and nobody will see it. They all know me and we shall easily get into Berne."

"Oh, how good you are!" cried the girl as the bundle was hidden under the brooms.

"Now I'll help you to pull the cart up-hill." She was strong and willing, and before Hansli knew it they were at the top of the hill.

When they got near Berne, the girl fell behind, and the road was so busy that Hansli had to look after his cart or it would have been knocked to pieces. But he left the girl's bundle in a safe place, and when he got home that night he wondered if he would see her again. She was not a pretty girl, but there was something nice and true about her.

On the next Tuesday, she was waiting on the same bench, and the cart seemed lighter when Hansli saw her.

"Have you got anything for me to carry?" asked Hansli, cheerfully.

"Yes," called out the girl, "but I would have come if I had not, to help you to drag your cart up-hill."

Every Tuesday the girl was there, to help Hansli with his cart, while he carried her bundle. They had not much time to talk, for Berne was very busy on a market day, but they got to know each other, and they liked each other more and more. Sometimes they walked home together, with the empty cart, at the end of



FIG. 46  
*The Broom Merchant*

the day, and Hansli's mother began to wonder why her boy seemed so happy. He whistled and sang as he made his brooms. He dressed himself so gaily.

"I believe he'll have a cow of his own some day," said Hansli's mother to herself.

One day Hansli came home looking very serious. "Mother," he said, "my cart is getting so heavy, and the way to Berne is very steep. I must have somebody to help me."

"You put too many brooms on your cart," said his mother. "Why do you not get a donkey to pull it? They don't cost much to keep."

"Donkeys are very obstinate," said Hansli. "And I would only want it on Tuesdays. I think I will get a wife."

"A wife?" cried Hansli's mother. "Ho! A wife? Why do you want a wife?"

"Well, she could help me to drag my cart," said Hansli. "She could plant potatoes. She could help to make the brooms."

"But where would you find such a girl?" asked his mother.

"Oh, I have found her," was Hansli's joyful answer. "But I have not yet asked her to marry me. I thought I would tell you first."

"You rogue of a boy," said his mother. "Is she a good girl?"

"A very good girl," said Hansli. "She has a lot of brothers and sisters, her parents are poor, she is as neat as a clock, and she tries to help everybody."

"Well, you would be sure to marry somebody," Hansli's mother told him. "So tell the girl to come and see me next Sunday."

Off went Hansli, and found his friend waiting for him. He told her that he could not drag the cart, even to Thun, by himself any longer.

"It is foolish of you to try," said the girl.

"If you would like to help me always, I will marry you," was what Hansli said next.

"If I am not too plain and poor," the young girl answered, "I would like to marry you."

"Then come and see my mother next Sunday," cried Hansli.

"I would like that very much," said the girl.

Next Sunday everything was ready in the cottage when the girl reached the village where Hansli lived, and she soon found his home. His mother liked her at once. She asked the

girl a great many questions about work in the kitchen and the garden, and whether she could read the New Testament. All the answers pleased Hansli's mother.

"You won't have a beautiful wife, but you will have a good one," she said to her son.

"It isn't beauty that makes the pot boil," replied Hansli. "And work and health are better than money."

They were married very soon. The girl had two new combs, and her father made her a pair of shoes, while her godmother gave her a frying pan. Hansli's cottage was to her a beautiful home, and she was a happy, modest, busy little wife.

When she and Hansli had been married a year, a baby came to the cottage.

"Oh ho, what a fine fellow!" cried his father. "In a wink he will be helping us to drag the cart." After a time the baby had brothers and sisters. Hansli rented a field, he grew willows of his own, bought a cow, and owned the cottage where he lived. And he always kept his promise that he would be kind to his good little wife.

Then a great thing happened to them. Hansli's elder sister died, and it was found that she had married a rich man. She left her fortune to her brother, Hansli, and everybody was glad. People began to ask him into their parlours instead of their kitchens when he came selling brooms, but he was just the same Hansli. His wife was not so pleased about the fortune as other people.

"You will despise me now," she sobbed, "because I am plain and simple." Hansli sat down in his big armchair, and looked at his wife.

"Listen, wife," he said. "We have been married for thirty years, and we have shared all we had. Do you think I am going to be different now? It is God who has sent us this fortune, and it belongs to us all. What pleases me is that my children and all my friends are glad and that shows they love me."

Hansli now had a farm of his own. He prayed and worked just as hard as he always had done, but he never went out to sell brooms. He left that to other people who needed the money. Hansli lived to be a strong and happy old man, and he said that the reason was that he loved God—loved work—and loved his fellow men.

## ADDITIONAL POEMS



### THE IMPORTANCE OF RHYTHM

THE "poetry" lesson involves more than the learning by heart of a few set pieces: its name on the time-table covers a wide field of work.

There is much in the school curriculum, and rightly so, that has little direct bearing on a child's emotion. Yet if the children are to be truly educated, their development will be three-fold—that is, in spirit as well as in mind and body. The study of poetry may play an important part in the development of the child's mind and spirit. In other words, through this subject the teacher may provide material which will stimulate the child's finest emotions and help toward their further growth. Wonder, joy, love—such treasures are worthy of cultivation, and in the study of good poetry there lies an opportunity to call them forth.

Experienced teachers, who can themselves appreciate good verse, have proved the value of placing good literature before the children while they are still very young. Modern psychologists have shown how very impressionable young children are. It is while the children are at an early stage that a taste begins to form for either good or bad. This fact will influence the teacher to choose the best possible material to read aloud to her class.

One teacher of 9-year-olds always reads a number of poems to the children of her class, and then leaves them to select what they will learn. She finds that almost invariably they choose what is, from a literary point of view, the best material.

Another class of 8-year-olds, in a Junior School, were accustomed to hearing much good poetry. It was read by a teacher who loved it herself, and who read it to the children just to give them pleasure. She made no attempt to teach these poems or to explain them, but just presented them as delightful music in words. From time to time the children picked out a bit here and a bit there, and asked for them to be

read again and again so that they might call them theirs. Some favourite extracts at one time were—

From "The Voice," by Rupert Brooke—

*Safe in the magic of the woods  
I lay and watched the dying light.*

*Silver and blue and green were showing  
And the dark wood grew darker still :  
And birds were hushed and peace was growing—  
And quietness crept up the hill.*

From "Endymion," by Keats—

*. . . . so that a whispering blade  
Of grass, a wailful gnat, a bee bustling  
Down in the blue-bells, or a even light rustling  
Among sere leaves and twigs, might all be heard.*

If the younger children can be so easily influenced to appreciate good verse, there rests on all who teach them a great responsibility to develop this appreciation much further, and this can be done by helping the children to look for the music in verse.

To find music in poetry introduces a freshness and variety into a lesson which has been in the past very generally associated with monotony.

Although, incidentally, the children will learn a good deal of verse by heart, the first aim is not merely to teach a number of poems written by well-known poets, but to help the children to appreciate those poems fully, to give them the opportunity to meet with good material, and to leave them with a desire for more. In order to arrive at this end the appeal is made through the ear rather than through the intellect, and the children are trained to listen for the music.

To children it is usually the musical rhythm in the verse which is the chief attraction: if the particular form of rhythm which belongs to some poem is lost, then the music has gone with it. It is disappointing to find how many boys and girls leave school without the power to

recognize the rhythm of a poem or keep it when they read the poem aloud.

We must first grasp the truth that it is the rhythm to which the child responds, for without it there is no music for the ear to delight in. A part of Noyes's poem "The Barrel Organ" was chosen for a class of children of 7-8 years. The children almost turned it into a song as they said it, and not a child failed to feel the change from its quick measure to its slow tune in the third line of the verse. It is the magic of the rhythm and not the quality of the rhyme that gives to this simple poem such a haunting music.

A class of 8-year-olds will respond to Shakespeare's lines—

*Under the greenwood tree  
Who loves to lie with me,  
And tune his merry note  
Unto the sweet bird's throat—  
Come hither, come hither, come hither?  
Here shall he see  
No enemy  
But winter and rough weather.*

The children will of themselves almost turn the first four lines into a song as they say them, and hardly a child will fail to feel the change of rhythm in the lines that follow.

It is again the magic of the rhythm rather than interest in the rhyme that gives the song its haunting music.

One may find music in lines, even though they

may convey no meaning to the mind. Some of the nonsense lines of the old folk-songs are a proof of this fact. They are sung with delight because of their particular swing, even though they mean nothing to us beyond a pleasant sound. This is the reason why little children will listen entranced to jingles and nonsense rhymes. But verse rhythm easily becomes exaggerated and then may fail to please the ear. Something is needed that appeals both to our emotion and to our intellect. Verse rhythm may please the ear yet offend the mind because it fails to conform to the rhythm of speech.

Perhaps one way in which the children can learn that poetry must satisfy the ear is by introducing them to music in poetry without any stress being put on the presence of rhyme. As poems for children generally rhyme, there is a danger of their thinking that the rhyme makes the poetry, instead of recognizing that it is due to the presence of the rhythm. "Take care of the rhythm and let the rhymes take care of themselves" is a good working motto.

Perhaps the worst thing that can be done to spoil the children's chance to appreciate poetry is to let them think they have to say it "with expression." If good material be used, our attention can be centred on helping the child to find the correct rhythm and to sound it, and the amount of expression will come right of itself. These facts should influence teachers to look critically at their choice of material and to their methods of helping the children to study poetry.



## MATERIAL FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES

When the children reach 7 years old they can progress beyond the nursery rhymes, jingles, and easy verses which they met in the Infants' School. Though the verse should still be as rhythmic as before, the average child now instinctively demands that there should be more definite point in the verses that he learns—some hint of story, more subtle humour, or lines with a meaning which arouse his interest or contain beautiful words, or some touch of adventure, even if it be only that of a tadpole. From seven years upward the children show us that they are prepared to enter more fully into any feeling which may be expressed through the poem, in addition to its sound. But the feeling that is to be aroused should be in accordance with the child's natural stage of development. One sometimes wonders if this need is remembered or sufficiently understood when one hears or reads some of the material which little children are given to commit to memory.

That a child likes it is not always sufficient reason for the memorizing of a poem, for to some children there is a curious attraction in verses which encourage them to revel in a morbid atmosphere. The child may be seeking for something to satisfy his desire for mystery or for adventure, and may think he has found his goal in verses which describe a tragic event in a child's life, or the picture of an old grandmother turning over a little sock in the attic chest. A class of 8-year-olds were found rejoicing in this last incident a while ago. The teacher herself had never noticed that the atmosphere of the poem was that of regret for the past—quite in keeping for a grandmother, but not in the least in harmony with the daily life of the child. The children liked the verses—unfortunately—but they were productive of a morbid atmosphere that was not of the healthiest, apart from their short-comings as poetry. Though they had liked them (possibly for the presence of the story element) it was soon found that the class really preferred something better, that was far more worth while.

They had reached a stage in their natural development when they wanted material which would appeal to imagination and arouse especi-

ally the emotion of wonder. No one understands better than Walter de la Mare how to give this hint of mystery in words that fit a child. His "Peacock Pie" is full of material of the best. "Someone" is loved by 7-year-olds. It begins with a mysterious knocking, the opening of a "wee" door, disclosing nothing but the darkness of the night, and goes on to speak of the tapping of the beetle, the call of the screech-owl, the whistling of the cricket, without losing anything of its mysterious atmosphere.

In planning a scheme of poetry for the Junior classes, it is well to keep in mind the wide span in the natural development in children of 7-11 years, both in mind and in spirit, and also to remember the widening number of their interests. If we hope that these girls and boys will love good literature when they leave school, now is the time when the scheme should include only that material which, from a literary point of view, is the best that can be found, and will at the same time interest the children. A little space may usefully be given to the consideration of some of the points that one has in mind in the search for right material.

*Rhythm*

As poetry is to be presented as music, the course should include only those poems whose rhythm is simple enough to be recognized by the children and will appeal to them. Sometimes the rhythm will be the reason for the choice. Who can resist the delightful swing of "The Lobster Quadrille," from *Alice in Wonderland*—

"Will you walk a little faster?" said a whiting  
to a snail,  
"There's a porpoise close behind us, and he's  
treading on my tail.  
See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all  
advance!  
They are waiting on the shingle. Will you come  
and join the dance?  
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you,  
will you join the dance?  
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you,  
won't you join the dance?"

Eleanor Farjeon is a mistress of good rhythm. It would be good for all children to meet her work. Her "Tunes of a Penny Piper" is full of it. The younger children will love "Mary and Her Kitten"—

*The Kitten's in the Dairy !  
Where's our Mary ?  
She isn't in the Kitchen,  
She isn't at her Stitching,  
She isn't at the Weeding,  
The Brewing, or the Kneading !  
Mary's in the Garden, walking in a Dream,  
Mary's got her Fancies, and the Kitten's got  
the Cream.*

Those who are somewhat older will find something almost strangely impelling in—

**LIGHT THE LAMPS UP, LAMPLIGHTER**  
*Light the lamps up, Lamplighter,  
The people are in the street—  
Without a light  
They have no sight,  
And where will they plant their feet ?  
Some will tread in the gutter,  
And some in the mud—oh dear !  
Light the lamps up, Lamplighter,  
Because the night is here.  
  
Light the candles, Grandmother,  
The children are going to bed—  
Without a wick  
They'll stumble and stick,  
And where will they lay their head ?  
Some will lie on the staircase,  
And some in the hearth—oh dear !  
Light the candles, Grandmother,  
Because the night is here.  
  
Light the stars up Gabriel,  
The cherubs are out to fly—  
If heaven is blind  
How will they find  
Their way across the sky ?  
Some will splash in the milky way,  
Or bump on the moon—oh dear !  
Light the stars up, Gabriel,  
Because the night is here.*

E. FARJEON.

The repetition of the phrase "Because the night is here," with its hint of mystery, will give satisfaction to many an imaginative child.

Many of the poems to be included will give a different type of rhythm; for instance, the gentle swing of the lullaby or the slow measure which suits a more serious subject.

Through a careful selection and arrangement of the order of the poems the children will gradually realize that the tune should always be in keeping with the subject. A good example of this will be found in "Shiv and the Grasshopper," from Kipling's *Jungle Book I.*

### Humour

Much of the material in the scheme will be there purposely as food for the developing emotions natural to the stages of childhood, through which the 7-11-year-olds are bound to pass. Their sense of fun must be remembered, and the healthy tonic that hearty laughter can be. The rollicking verses of Edward Lear are there for use. Does one ever get beyond the enjoyment of the ridiculous situation described in "The Owl and the Pussy-cat"? Some of the unfamiliar nursery rhymes, too, provide much enjoyment, and are too little known. The ridiculous situation in the following provokes a good deal of merriment—

### KING ARTHUR'S PUDDING

*When good King Arthur ruled this land  
He was a worthy King :  
He stole two pecks of barley meal  
To make a bag-pudding.  
A bag-pudding the Queen did make  
And filled it full of plums,  
And in it put great lumps of fat  
As big as my two thumbs.  
The King himself did eat thereof,  
Great noblemen beside,  
And what they could not eat that night  
The Queen next morning fried.*

(TRADITIONAL.)

### Imagination

The world of pretence for the younger children, developing into a world of mystery for the older ones, claims attention; the middle stage children are beginning to think of the wonderful things they can do—with or without the chance!

It is the common experience of thousands of the younger children to have "pretending" children. A little boy had a whole family of children whom he called "The Browns" and he never went out without them. On being reproved by his father one day for leaving open a shop door, he said in tones of real distress, "But, Daddy, you have shut out all the Browns, and they won't know where we are." Such children can enter with feeling into the poem "Mrs. Brown," by R. Fyleman.

The children of the middle stage see themselves doing wonders on very little basis, and can identify themselves with "The Pedlar's Caravan"—

*I wish I lived in a caravan,  
With a horse to drive, like a pedlar-man!*

But the older ones, though still looking for music, are ready for something more advanced in feeling. Lines which tell of high courage stir their hearts. The story of Horatius in the history lesson is enriched by the study of part of Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome." On the other hand, a difficult subject like the story of the "Seven Bishops" in the reign of James II becomes alive with feeling when along with it is taken "The Song of the Western Men," and the class is moved by such lines as—

*Trelawney he's in keep and hold,  
Trelawney he may die!  
But here's twenty thousand Cornish bold  
Will see the reason why!*

### *The Value of Mental Imagery*

Young children cannot think on abstract lines, but they can make pictures in their minds.

To begin with, the picture is only very simple, and is probably built up through the exercise of the visual sense only. But, although simple, it is a help to the child in his study of a poem. His mind grasps the substance of what he is reading or hearing more clearly because it has that little picture in it. At first the teacher may have to help him to find the picture, and then to see it, but by degrees he will come to find pictures in words for himself. By and by, as he reads descriptive material, either in verse or in prose, he will find not only "images of sight" but also "images of sound."

As the child's ability to image increases, his stock of ideas also will increase. By thinking in pictures, he is taking the first steps toward that time when he will be able to appreciate the expression of an abstract idea.

The power to image will develop gradually but steadily if there is the opportunity for it to be exercised and if suitable material is provided for the process. It is in descriptive poetry, even more perhaps than in prose, that attractive material can easily be found.

The poems chosen for their mental imagery should present pictures which are sharply defined, and in the earliest stages they should have a very simple background, so that the child can see "the images of imagination" without any confusion of mind.

In view of the importance of the growth of the power to image, as a part of the child's mental development, the teacher will need much pictorial material for her class.

The order of arrangement of the material to be used will be a factor in the mental development of the child. The poems should be selected so that the study of them demands a steady increase of power to image, whether through the exercise of the sense of sight or that of sound. If successfully chosen, the work done will show progression in difficulty.

The following selection of poems shows an attempt to illustrate this principle of progression, and it suggests that as the child grows and develops in mind so should his power to image become richer.

### *Stage I*

A rhyme is chosen which contains nothing that is not familiar to the average little child. It can be given to him straight away without any preparation of his mind.

*There was a little man, and he had a little gun,  
And his bullets were made of lead, lead, lead;  
He went to the brook, and saw a little duck,  
And shot it through the head, head, head.*

*He carried it home to his old wife Joan,  
And bade her a fire to make, make, make;  
To roast the little duck he had shot in the brook,  
And he'd go and fetch the drake, drake, drake,*

There are three little pictures for the children to find—

(1) The little man standing by the brook, aiming his gun at the little duck and suddenly shooting.

(2) The little man arriving home, presenting the duck to his wife, who sets to work to make a fire to roast the duck.

(3) The little man setting out from home, gun in hand, to go to shoot the drake.

The 7-year-olds can make those pictures very clearly in their minds. They can express them in words, they can also mime them or draw them, as a test of their power of constructive imagination.

There are children in very poor districts who could begin their practice in mental imagery more successfully if they had material in which "brooks" and "ducks" took no part. They might make clearer pictures from—

*Old King Cole was a merry old soul,  
And a merry old soul was he.  
He called for his pipe, and he called for his bowl,  
And he called for his fiddlers three.  
Every fiddler had a fine fiddle,  
And a very fine fiddle had he.  
Then Twee, tweedle dee, tweedle dee went the  
fiddles—  
And merrier we will be.*

## Stage II

"The Dandelion," by Frances Cornford, still presents a very familiar subject. The objects to be put into the mental picture are the dandelion, grass, children, men, carts, dogs—all everyday things. There are only a few children, comparatively, to whom they are not all known.

### THE DANDELION

*The dandelion is brave and gay,  
And loves to grow beside the way :  
A braver thing was never seen  
To praise the grass for growing green.  
You never saw a gayer thing  
To sit and smile and praise the spring.  
The children with their simple hearts,  
The lazy men that come in carts,  
The little dogs that lollipop by,  
They all have seen its shining eye.  
And every one of them would say  
They never saw a thing so gay.*

The first verse gives the picture of a personality. The children should first try to see with their mind's eye that gay little flower, so alert, so alive to all around it, in its setting of green grass. The picture of the flower's individuality will grow from an appreciation of the force of the words "brave, gay, beside the way, sit and smile and praise."

In verse two the material is at hand to be *added* to the picture already formed. The canvas becomes a little more crowded, though the gay little flower still remains the centre of attention.

The class should see how clear the writer of the verse has made the little additions which are now introduced.

The simple-hearted children—the word "simple" brings very natural children to one's mind. And they go into the picture.

"The lazy men that come in carts"—suggests the familiar sight of the man who sits on the shaft of the slow-moving cart, the reins held slackly in his hand. And he goes into the picture.

"The little dogs that lollipop by"—the word "lollipop" gives the exact detail that is wanted. And they pass into the picture.

Children, men, and dogs all look and then pass on, but with a difference because they have met the gay little yellow flower "beside the way."

## Stage III

The poem "A Lullaby of the Iroquois" (from *Flint and Feather*, by Pauline Johnson) was written by a princess of the Red Indians. She was of the Mohawk tribe and her Indian name was Tekahionwake. It is a lullaby sung by the Red Indian mothers of the tribe of the Iroquois to their babies, as they swing in their cradles on the branches of the trees.

### A LULLABY OF THEIROQUOIS

*Little brown baby-bird, lapped in your nest,  
Wrapped in your nest,  
Strapped in your nest,  
Your straight little cradle-board rocks you to rest.  
Its hands are your nest,  
Its bands are your nest ;  
It swings from the down-bending branch of the oak ;*



FIG. 47  
"Little Brown Baby bird Swinging to Sleep"

*You watch the camp flame and the curling grey smoke ;  
 But, oh, for your pretty black eyes sleep is best—  
 Little brown baby of mine, go to rest.  
 Little brown baby-bird swinging to sleep,  
 Winging to sleep,  
 Singing to sleep,  
 Your wonder-black eyes that so wide open keep,  
 Shielding their sleep,  
 Unyielding to sleep ;  
 The heron is homing, the plover is still,  
 The night-owl calls from his haunt on the hill,  
 Afar the fox barks, afar the stars peep—  
 Little brown baby of mine, go to sleep.*

This poem treats of separate objects which are familiar in themselves to most children, but they are not in a familiar setting.

The first verse gives the main objects which can be *seen* in the picture. Though they are stated clearly in the poem, the children will make a fuller and richer mental picture if some study is first made of the geographical setting of the subject. If the class has already learnt how the Red Indians live, heard of their encampments, and seen a picture of the baby's cradle, then the words *lapped*, *wrapped*, *strapped*, *cradle-board*, *hands*, *bands*, will each contribute its full share in the making of a picture in the mind.

As the first verse gives a picture to be seen through the use of the *visual* sense, so the second verse adds to it through the use of the *auditory* sense. The last four lines suggest the darkening world, overtaken by a feeling of quiet and silence only made the more evident by the mention of the sounds that strike across it.

The poem is full of atmosphere, which wraps itself round the picture and should be maintained by the modulation of the teacher's voice.

The rhythm is so aptly chosen for the subject that one can feel how it helps to make the picture.

#### Stage IV

Shakespeare is often thought of as a poet who has nothing to offer for children of the Junior age. Yet teachers will find that some of their best material is being passed over unless this idea is dispelled. Several of his songs, which are scattered here and there among his lighter plays,

can form the children's first introduction to Shakespeare while they are still quite young.

#### COME UNTO THESE YELLOW SANDS

(Ariel's song from *The Tempest*.)

*Come unto these yellow sands,  
 And then take hands :  
 Court'sied when you have, and kiss'd,  
 (The wild waves whist),  
 Foot it fealty here and there ;  
 And, sweet sprites, the burthen bear.  
 Hark, hark !  
 Bow-wow.  
 The watch-dogs bark :  
 Bow-wow.  
 Hark, hark ! I hear  
 The strain of strutting chanticleer,  
 Cry, Cock-a-doodle-doo.*

Ariel's song gives a picture the objects in which are quite familiar to children of 8 or 9 years of age. Yet the poem is an advance on those previously quoted, as it contains words which are likely to be unknown to the class. These words must be understood before the scene described can emerge into full light.

*Court'sied*, *whist*, *fealty*, *sprites*, *burthen*, and *chanticleer*, all call for some slight discussion. The children should try to glean the meaning for themselves before an explanation is given. The meaning of "court'sied" is clear, but if left without comment, the children will think that Shakespeare could not spell correctly.

The picture in this poem is so delightfully simple and the movement in it is so perfectly expressed that few children of 8 or 9 will fail to respond to it. What will they see in their pictures? The broad yellow sands, the fairies' approach, partners take hands and with a curtsey kiss, and only the wild waves are there to see. The dance follows—up and down with nimble feet they go, lost in the joy of it all.

Suddenly across the fairy world there strikes an unwelcome sound. All stop to listen. The watch-dogs are on guard—the cock crows the call of dawn.

The children should *listen* as well as *look* when they build the picture in Ariel's Song.

## Stage V

## A PRAYER FOR A LITTLE HOME

(FLORENCE BONE)

*God give us a little home,  
To come back to, when we roam.  
  
Low walls and fluted tiles,  
Wide windows—a view for miles.*

*Red firelight, and deep chairs,  
Small white beds upstairs.*

*Great talk in little nooks,  
Dim colours, rows of books.*

*One picture on each wall,  
Not many things at all.*

*God give us a little ground,  
With tall trees standing round.*

*Homely flowers in brown sod,  
Overhead, Thy stars, O God.*

*God bless, when winds blow,  
Our home, and all we know.*

At first sight this poem may not seem to be a further stage in difficulty of material on the previous ones. Every object mentioned in it is perfectly familiar, but here there is not one picture but a series of little snapshots.

Yet the little pictures combine to present one idea to the mind—that of the little house of one's imagination. The 10-year-olds are old enough to follow the theme and to understand the abstract thought which the pictures are intended to convey to the mind.

It will be noticed that this poem is the first to be quoted which intentionally combines simple mental imagery on the one hand with an abstract idea on the other, and brings the two together.

## Stage VI

Unless children have already had training in the making of mental pictures, they cannot get the full flavour which the old ballads have to give them. It is not merely the swing of the rhythm or the details of the story that the

teacher wants them to enjoy, but it is also the richness of the mental imagery.

In a ballad, one word picture usually succeeds another very quickly as the story unfolds, but each one is complete in itself. The listener loses much of the atmosphere of the ballad, as it is read or spoken, unless each picture is seen in all its richness of detail.

Children of 11 years love ballads, but often the incidents that go to make up the story of the ballad are not suitable for them. Yet there are a few ballads which treat of life simply enough for them to be used. The teacher should look for these, collect them together and let the children have them at this period. Several will be found quoted or referred to in this volume.

"Lord Bateman" is eminently suitable for Juniors. It abounds in material from which the children can make their own mental pictures.

## LORD BATEMAN

*Lord Bateman was a noble lord,  
A noble lord of high degree.  
He shipped himself aboard a ship  
Some foreign country to go and see.*

*He sailed east, he sailed west  
Until he came to fair Turky,  
Where he was taken and put in prison  
Until of life he was weary.*

*All in his prison grew a tree,  
O there it grew so stout and strong ;  
About the middle he was chained,  
Until his life was almost gone.*

*This Turk he had one daughter fair,  
The fairest maid two eyes could see ;  
She stole of her father the prison key,  
And said, "Lord Bateman, he shall be free."*

*She to the cellar then took her way  
And gave to him the best of wine ;  
And every health to him she drank,  
Was, "Would, Lord Bateman, that thou avert mine*

*"For seven long years I'll make a vow,  
For seven long years, and keep't I can,  
That if you'll wed no other maid,  
Then I will wed not another man."*

*She took him to her father's port.*

*She gave him to a ship of fame,  
Saying, "Farewell to you, Lord Bateman,  
I fear we shall never meet again."*

*Now seven long years are gone and past  
And fourteen days as I tell thee.*

*She packed up her apparel gay  
And said, "Lord Bateman I must go see."*

*Now when she reached Lord Bateman's hall,  
How boldly then she rang the bell.*

*"Who's there? Who's there?" does the porter call,  
"O come unto me and quickly tell.*

*"Is this Lord Bateman's castle high?  
And is his Lordship now within?"*

*"Oh yes, oh yes," said the porter proud,  
"He just is taking his young bride in."*

*"Oh, bid him send me a slice of bread  
And send a bottle of choicest wine,  
And bid him remember the fair young maid  
Who set him free from his close confine."*

*And when Lord Bateman this did hear,  
He broke his sword in splinters three  
And said, "My bride, you must home again,  
The Turkish maid she has come to me.*

*"Call up your maidens and all your men,  
For you must speedily from me fare;  
You came to me on a saddled horse  
You may go home in a coach and pair."*

*Lord Bateman made another marriage  
With both their hearts so full of glee,  
And said, "I'll roam to no foreign lands  
Now my Turkish maid has crossed the sea."*

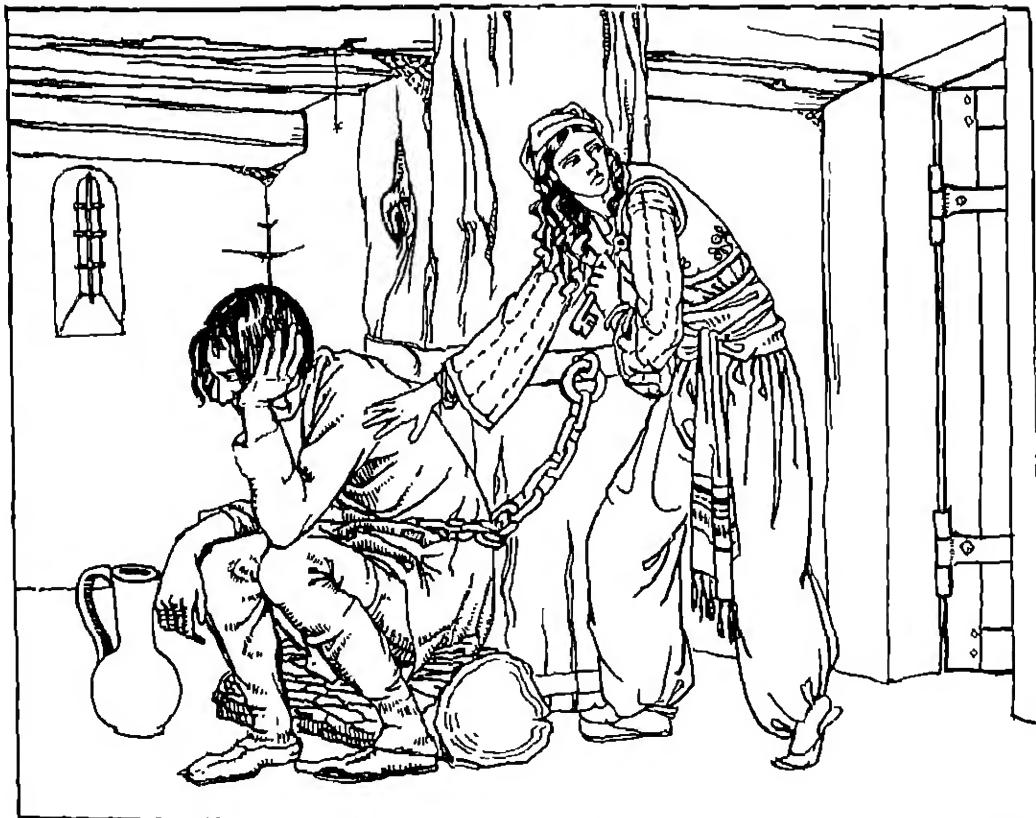


FIG. 48  
"Lord Bateman, he shall be free"

## MEMORIZATION: THE VALUE OF THE INTRODUCTION

One of the problems in teaching poems to young children is how to help those children to memorize the poem without spoiling its freshness. Some children have remarkably quick verbal memories, and, given a good ear for rhythm, they pick up the words of a poem very quickly and become word perfect in a surprisingly short space of time. There are poems and there are children who need no introduction at all the one to the other; they come together best if left to themselves, and the best method may be to make it possible for these children to read the poems, choose their own, and re-read them until they can say them. Yet in many classes these children are in the minority, and as they are the easy people to teach they can be left out of the question. All teachers have many children in their classes who need guidance to show them how to learn by heart. It is for them that special methods are devised which may lessen their difficulty in committing exact words to memory.

The more quickly the children get into tune with the subject they are to study, the more quickly they will remember it. This close relationship between the children and the subject to be studied is often affected by the way in which the subject is approached. In other words, the value of the introduction to the subject should be appreciated.

In the teacher's mind the purpose of the introduction to the poetry lesson is to prepare the way so that the child's mind is brought easily and quickly into the atmosphere of the poem. Not only the subject of the poem but even some of the more difficult phrases in it may be brought quite naturally into this introduction, so that the children may become familiar with them before they try to commit the words to memory.

In planning the introduction the teacher explores the poem, tries to get into its atmosphere for herself and enter into its meaning, and then she turns to consider the minds of the class to see where she can make a point of contact between the children's experiences and the matter to which she intends to introduce them. If the children have no direct experience on

which the teacher can draw, she may still make that necessary point of contact between their minds and the new material of the lesson by relating some experience of her own. It must be an experience into which they can enter with interest, or some description or story which they can understand, and which will act as a clue to the new matter in such a way that it will mean something to each child in the class.

There are some poems which attract children but are too difficult in thought for them to memorize unless some help is given in the approach to them. It seems a pity to let the younger children learn only the easy things when many of them are eager to make the effort to go farther. It is a mistake not to use this desire where it exists. The *form* of the introduction often makes the attack on a more difficult subject possible, and, when successful, may make it easier for a child to go farther ahead by himself.

The content of the introduction and the method of taking it will vary from poem to poem. A few illustrations to show differences of purpose may be useful.

1. *To Stimulate Mental Imagery*

A rather slow class of 8-9-year-olds were to memorize the poem—

## SILVER

*Slowly, silently, now the moon  
Walks the night in her silver shoon :  
This way, and that, she peers, and sees  
Silver fruit upon silver trees ;  
One by one the casements catch  
Her beams beneath the silvery thatch :  
Couched in his kennel, like a log,  
With paws of silver, sleeps the dog ;  
From their shadowy eale the white breasts peep  
Of doves in a silver-feathered sleep :  
A harvest mouse goes scampering by,  
With silver claws and silver eye ;  
And moveless fish in the water gleam  
By silver reeds in a silver stream.*

W. DE LA MARE.

To enjoy this poem as well as to memorize it the children must be able to make a mental picture of what it describes. This particular class had but little training in the making of mental pictures and needed help.

Questions were asked to recall the children's experiences of a scene by moonlight. Differences between night and day in such a scene



were discussed, especially with regard to colour. The children introduced the idea of black and white, grey and silver, though they had not seen the words of the poem at this stage of the lesson. Copies of the words of the poem were next examined by the

children. The idea of the moon as a person was new to them, but they were able to find the idea for themselves after some discussion of the first three lines of the poem and the movement implied in them. Silent re-reading of the poem led to finding the details given by the poet which would be needed by any one who was going to construct the scene of the poem. The outstanding features were collected from the class as they read and found them.

Children who were experienced in the use of mental imagery could then be left to compose the picture for themselves and pass on to re-reading the poem and to memorizing it. But these children were not sufficiently practised, and the result with the majority would have been a mind with no picture in it at all but only a series of words. To help them to a definite picture the poem was re-read silently, and each detail picked out again and discussed as the picture was planned in imagination. The end of the classroom was thought of as being the stage on which the scene was to be constructed. The children decided where each object was to be placed in imagination.

It was interesting to find out how clearly some of the children began to see the poet's picture. For instance, in the lines "couched in his kennel . . . sleeps the dog" the children saw for themselves that the dog's body would be in shadow, but that his paws lying out over the edge of the kennel caught the light of the moon.

## 2. *To Create Atmosphere to Bring Out the Right Spirit of the Poem*

"Lord Ullin's Daughter" is an example of a poem which has been known to fail entirely in its atmosphere through the lack of a fitting approach.

One teacher felt that, at all costs, she must not hand on her own childhood's experience. She always saw the tragic moment of the story as depicted by a broad pond rather suggestive of a park lake, with a bare arm and hand sticking out of the middle of the water. To her and her young friends the incident had been almost comic. The true atmosphere of the poem had never touched them.

She was teaching children of 11 years of age who lived in a very poor district. They were learning about Scotland, but they knew nothing of chieftains, clans, or glens from their own experience.

She approached the ballad through a study of pictures of wild Scottish glens, rushing streams, and high mountains. Into that geographical setting she introduced the idea of neighbouring clans and the feuds that could exist between them.

When she felt that the children had entered into the atmosphere she was trying to create and could appreciate something of the emotion of the poem, then, and not till then, did she introduce them to the story in the form of a ballad.

### LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

(T. Campbell)

*A Chieftain, to the Highlands bound, cries, "Boat-man, do not tarry!  
And I'll give thee a silver pound, to row us o'er  
the ferry."  
"Now, who be ye would cross Loch-Gyle, this dark  
and stormy water?"  
"Oh! I'm the chief of Ulva's Isle, and this Lord  
Ullin's daughter;  
And fast before her father's men three days we've  
fled together;  
For, should he find us in the glen, my blood would  
stain the heather.*

*Its horsemen hard behind us ride ; should they  
our steps discover,  
Then who will cheer my bonny bride when they  
have slain her lover ?*"

*Out spoke the hardy Highland wight, " I'll go, my  
chief—I'm ready :  
It is not for your silver bright but for your winsome  
lady :  
And, by my word ! the bonny bird in danger shall  
not tarry ;  
So, though the waves are raging white, I'll row you  
o'er the ferry."*"

*By this the storm grew loud apace, the water-wraith  
was shrieking ;  
And, in the scowl of heaven, each face grew dark as  
they were speaking,  
But still as wilder blew the wind, and as the night  
grew drearer,  
Adown the glen rode arm'd men—their trampling  
sounded nearer !  
" Oh, haste thee, haste," the lady cries ; " though  
tempests round us gather,  
I'll meet the raging of the skies, but not an angry  
father."*"

*The boat has left a stormy land—a stormy sea  
before her !  
When, oh ! too strong for human hand, the tempest  
gathered o'er her !  
And still they rowed, amidst the roar of waters fast  
prevailing.  
Lord Ullin reached that fatal shore—his wrath was  
changed to wailing ;  
For, sore dismayed, through storm and shade, his  
child he did discover ;  
One lovely arm she stretched for aid, and one was  
round her lover.*

*" Come back ! come back !" he cried in grief,  
across this stormy water :  
" And I'll forgive your Highland chief !—my  
daughter ! oh, my daughter !"  
—Twas vain : the loud waves lashed the shore,  
return or aid preventing ;  
The waters wild went o'er his child—and he was  
left lamenting !*

### 3. To Clear Away Difficulties Raised by Unfamiliar Words or Phrases

Sometimes a few odd words are outside the children's vocabulary, and the meaning cannot be gained from their context. Often it is a phrase that is apart from the children's experience. It is possible that, unless these difficulties are cleared away, a poem may mean very little to children when it might mean a great deal.

An illustration of a difficult phrase is found in Wordsworth's poem—

#### IN MARCH

*The cock is crowing,  
The stream is flowing,  
The small birds twitter,  
The lake doth glitter.  
The green fields sleep in the sun :  
The oldest and youngest  
Are at work with the strongest.  
The cattle are grazing,  
Their heads never raising ;  
There are forty feeding like one !  
Like an army defeated  
The snow hath retreated,  
And now doth fare ill  
On the top of the bare hill ;  
The ploughboy is whooping—anon-anon :  
There's joy in the mountains ;  
There's life in the fountains ;  
Small clouds are sailing,  
Blue sky prevailing :  
The rain is over and gone !*

This attractive poem is really very simple, with the exception of the one phrase "There are forty feeding like one." This expression is remote from Juniors, and if they do not understand its meaning the mental picture which they will make from the words of the poem will be unfinished. Also, if their minds are puzzled each time they reach that line, it will check their enjoyment as well as prevent their mental picture from being clear-cut.

### 4. To Use Nature Study Lessons as an Introduction to Poems

The Nature study lesson may often be the poem's predecessor. This means that the Nature

lesson may be a definite preparation of the children's minds for the literature lesson to follow.

A Nature ramble in a country district, which has the definite aim of making a study of trees and their characteristics, gives just the right preparation for such a poem as—

#### TREES

*The Oak is called the King of Trees,  
The Aspen quivers in the breeze,  
The Poplar grows up straight and tall,  
The Pear tree spreads along the wall,  
The Sycamore gives pleasant shade,  
The Willow droops in watery glade,  
The Fir tree useful timber gives,  
The Beech amid the forest lives.*

SARA COLERIDGE

Lessons on "adaptation to environment," which stress the need of careful observation, will have a fitting illustration in the lines taken from the Authorized Version of the Bible (Book of Proverbs)—

*There be four things which are little upon the earth  
But they are exceeding wise :  
The ants are a people not strong,  
Yet they prepare their meat in summer ;  
The conies are but a feeble folk,  
Yet they make their houses in the rocks ;  
The locusts have no king,  
Yet they go forth all of them by bands ;  
The spider taketh hold with her hands,  
And is in kings' palaces.*

#### 5. To Tell the Story of the Poem

It is necessary to differentiate between those poems containing a story which will benefit if the story is first told to the class, and those poems which should be left to tell their stories for themselves. The type of material in the story of the poem should settle this question. If the children can take the poem and find the story in it for themselves without confusion of mind, then to tell the story is superfluous.

When the later stage of the Junior course is reached, there are many story poems which can be used and enjoyed, but which are just a little too difficult unless the way is prepared by some chosen method of approach. But if such

poems have some introduction, the scope of the material provided at this stage can be considerably widened.

An illustration of this type of poem is found in "Lochinvar," by Sir Walter Scott. It has a thrilling plot and a good swinging rhythm, and children love it.

An outline of the story, tersely and vividly told, will clear away all the difficulties. Such words as *brake*, *craven*, *galliard*, as well as a reference to the different clans can be woven into the plot so that the meaning is clear without any interruption in the narration of the story.

When the story has been told, the poem can be given over to the class and the children will respond to its music and to the action of the story, and can rush ahead with it.

#### LOCHINVAR

*O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west !  
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best ;  
And, save his good broad-sword, he weapon had  
none ;  
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone !  
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,  
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar !*

*He staid not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,  
He swam the Esk river where ford there was none—  
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,  
The bride had consented !—the gallant came late !—  
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war  
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar !*

*So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,  
'Mong bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers,  
and all :  
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his  
sword—  
For the poor craven bridegroom said never a  
word—  
"O, come ye in peace here, or come ye in war —  
Or to dance at our bridal ?—young Lord Lochinvar !"*

*"I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied :  
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like the tide !  
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine  
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine !—  
There are maidens in Scotland, more lovely by far,  
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar !"*

*The bride kissed the goblet ! The knight took it up,  
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the  
cup !*

*She looked down to blush, and she looked up to  
sigh—*

*With a smile on her lip, and a tear in her eye.  
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar—  
"Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.*

*So stately his form, and so lovely her face,  
That never a hall such a galliard did grace !  
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,  
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and  
plume ;  
And the bride-maidens whispered, " 'Twere better  
by far  
To have matched our fair cousin with young  
Lochinvar."*

*One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,  
When they reached the hall door, and the charger  
stood near—*

*So light to the croup the fair lady he swung,  
So light to the saddle before her he sprung !  
"She is won ! we are gone, over bank, bush and  
scaur !  
They'll have fleet steeds that follow!" quoth young  
Lochinvar.*

*There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby  
clan :*

*Fosters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and  
they ran ;*

*There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lea—  
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.  
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,  
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar ?*

#### 6. To Give a Setting to Precede the Poem

An introduction to a poem can be given in the form of a story or a descriptive lesson and yet in no way tell the story of the poem itself. This is particularly true of poems which can be used to illustrate the lessons in history. It is a pity that the connection between literature and history is not closer and that often the children get the idea that these are two subjects which should be kept apart.

The history lesson could often be enriched and the subject made more alive if literature could be regarded, not as a sort of fancy trimming for a history lesson, but as an integral part of it.

"Barbara Frietchie," by J. G. Whittier, is a poem which has proved to be a favourite with



FIG. 49  
"She is Won"

11-year-olds, and deserves to be more widely used.

The children may not be learning American history, but at that age they frequently are hearing about the freedom of the slaves. This subject can be taken not only round the story of Wilberforce, but also round the War of the North and South in the United States.

As the story of the Civil War unfolds, the children will see that there were good men on both sides, but that they held different views about the same subject. In this case the course of lessons in history makes the introduction to the poem in literature, and without any direct preparation on the poem itself the children's minds are ready for it.

#### BARBARA FRIETCHIE

*Up from the meadows rich with corn,  
Clear in the cool September morn,*

*The clustered spires of Frederick stand,  
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.*

*Round about them orchards sweep—  
Apple and peach-tree fruited deep—*

*Fair as a garden of the Lord  
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,*

*On that pleasant morn of the early fall  
When Lee marched over the mountain wall—*

*Over the mountains winding down,  
Horse and foot, into Frederick to'en.*

*Forty flags with their silver stars,  
Forty flags with their crimson bars,*

*Flapped in the morning wind : the sun  
Of noon looked down, and saw not one,*

*Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,  
Boreed with her fourscore years and ten ;*

*Bravest of all in Frederick town,  
She took up the flag the men hauled down :*

*In her attic window the staff she set,  
To show that one heart was loyal yet.*

*Up the street came the rebel tread,  
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.*

*Under his slouched hat left and right  
He glanced : the old flag met his sight.*

*"Halt!"—the dust brown ranks stood fast.  
"Fire!"—out blazed the rifle-blast.*

*It shivered the window, pane and sash ;  
It rent the banner with seam and gash.*

*Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff,  
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.*

*She leaned far out on the window-sill,  
And shook it forth with a royal will.*

*"Shoot, if you must, this old grey head,  
But spare your country's flag," she said.*

*A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,  
Over the face of the leader came ;*

*The nobler nature within him stirred  
To life at that woman's deed and word :*

*"Who touches a hair of your grey head,  
Dies like a dog ! March on !" he said.*

*All day long through Frederick street  
Sounded the tread of marching feet ;*

*All day long that free flag lost  
Over the heads of the rebel host.*

*Ever its torn folds rose and fell  
On the loyal winds that loved it well ;*

*And through the hill-gaps sunset light  
Shone over it with a warm good-night.*

*Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,  
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.*

*Honour to her !—and let a tear  
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.*

*Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,  
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave !*

*Peace and order and beauty draw  
Round the symbol of light and law ;*

*And ever the stars above look down  
On thy stars below in Frederick town*

## MEMORIZATION: VARIETY OF ATTACK

The necessity to ensure that the children know the words of a poem, coupled with the difficulty of a very large class, has driven some teachers to think that their only method to make sure of success is to teach through simultaneous repetition or chorus speaking.

There are occasions when chorus speaking is legitimate, and there are poems which lend themselves to it, but one needs to be quite sure that both occasion and poem are wisely selected.

Chorus work is often used with children because it has been found to be an easy way to get a number of words learnt by heart, and at the same time keep the whole class occupied. But it often means death to the spirit of the poem and reduces to a minimum any call on the child's intelligence.

Chorus speaking may demand a forced rhythm, or an artificial expression, in the place of the rhythm suggested by the words of the writer. Each poem has a rhythm peculiarly its own, but the moment it is rendered in chorus, the music must be kept within certain limits and the result is often a measured sound familiar to all who have listened to a class reciting in this way.

It is necessary, therefore, that chorus speaking should be kept for those poems that will keep their attraction when given in this rather measured form.

There has recently been a revival of chorus speaking among adults. It is advisable to remind oneself that adults are already conscious of the rhythm they mean to preserve, and therefore they control their speaking so that it will harmonize with the rhythm of the poem.

Children approach the recital of a poem in a different way, and if they are allowed to speak often in chorus, the force of chorus speaking may so influence the children's rendering that all poems will be in danger of being given in the same way.

But if simultaneous work, as a general principle, has to go, something else must take its place and do the work of making the class familiar with the words, so that a poem will become each child's sure possession.

Familiarity will come through variety of

attack. In all classes there are all types of mind and of musical ear. Some children learn very easily through their sense of sound, while others need a method which calls into use their sense of sight, and all may be helped by that which calls forth their understanding of the meaning of the poem. The teacher's object is to bring the child's attention again and again to the poem, but always with a fresh attitude of mind, so that the words may be known and reckoned, yet without boredom. Many children have been bored by poems long before they were word-perfect.

Different poems suggest different methods, so perhaps the clearest way to show variety of attack will be through the description of actual practical experience.

1. *Variety in the Lesson*

The first illustration shows an attempt to include in the one lesson as many varieties of attack as were permitted by the matter and rhythm of the poem, which is from *Alice in Wonderland*, by Lewis Carroll.

## LOBSTER QUADRILLE

"Will you walk a little faster?" said a whiting to a snail,

"There's a porpoise close behind us, and he's treading on my tail.

See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all advance!

They are waiting on the shingle: will you come and join the dance?

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join the dance?

"You can really have no notion how delightful it will be

When they take us up and throw us, with the lobsters, out to sea!"

But the snail replied "Too far, too far!" and gave a look askance.

Said he thanked the whiting kindly, but he would not join the dance.

*Would not, could not, would not, could not,  
would not join the dance,  
Would not, could not, would not, could not,  
could not join the dance.*

"What matters it how far we go?" his scaly friend replied.

"There is another shore you know, upon the other side,

The further off from England, the nearer is to France—

Then turn not pale, beloved snail, but come and join the dance.

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join the dance?"

The introduction to the poem took the form of a brief account, given by the teacher, of Alice's visit to the Mock Turtle. It led up to the Mock Turtle's Song and included the meaning of *porpoise*, *whiting*, *shingle*, *lobsters*, for the class contained children as young as 7 years of age.

### *Study of the Poem*

1. The poem was then presented as a whole. It was first recited by the teacher, while the children listened. This was to ensure that the children heard the rhythm correctly given when they met the poem for the first time. They were then given the words of the poem so that they could read it to themselves.

2. A study of the words came next, and this was directed by a series of questions. The answers produced: (a) A mental picture built up from verse one; (b) Expression of the contrast of feeling of the whiting with that of the snail, as shown in verses two and three, with the reasons for it. Incidentally, the more difficult words *notion*, *askance*, *shingle*, *scaly* came into the discussion.

3. Study of the rhythm in more detail followed.

(a) A contrast between the slower rhythm of the verse and the quick chorus was found by the class. The chorus was recited by the class speaking together, and hand movements were used to express the rhythm. (When hand move-

ments are made to express rhythm, care should be taken that a movement is chosen which is an exact expression of the rhythm under consideration, and not just a loose, careless gesture—see pp. 120 and 121.)

(b) The rhythm of the verses was next examined and expressed through movements both of hands and of feet. Steps were tried till a tripping step was found which fitted the words "Will you walk a little faster," and so on until the chorus was reached, when it was found that it required quite a different step to express it.

The poem was taken on these lines more than once, so that the class could grow accustomed to the sound of the words. The teacher spoke them but the children stepped in turns, the others following the words from their copies of the poem. Toward the end of this section of the lesson, the children turned their papers over and where they could they joined the teacher, giving a phrase here and a phrase there. Some contributed more than others, but all gave their contributions in a whisper. Only whispers were allowed during the verses, as the delicacy of the rhythm would be less likely to be spoilt. When the chorus was reached, where the rhythm was perfectly regular, the children were permitted to speak the words aloud. The words were now partly known.

4. *Revision of the Words.* The children turned back to their copies of the poem and looked the words over to test themselves, after which each child said the poem quietly to his partner, who shared his seat.

5. *Individual Recitation.* The verses were now recited by separate individuals to the whole class, all the children joining in the chorus. To further the variety of method, the whiting and snail spoke in parts, and the recital became a dialogue.

By the end of the lesson the class knew the poem.

The teacher can find other poems which, in moderation, offer legitimate places where the whole class may take up the poem and speak it together. But it should also be kept in mind that, while such a method can be very fitting with some types of material, it can be gravely out of place with others.

2. *Group Work for Chorus Speaking*

In chorus speaking by children the rhythm is kept much more finely if the number of children speaking be small. It is well when the class can be divided into small groups. The poem "The Bells of London" is admirable for such a method. The rhyme is extremely regular because the bells should ring one after another without a pause.

The introductory verse is of a different rhythm and should stand out as apart from the chiming bells. An individual speaker will give this verse and then the poem will be taken up by each group in turn. The exact rhythm can be found by each group fitting the words to the action used by a bell-ringer. As the bells of each church speak, the group will ring the bells by gesture. The lines are marked at the places where the imaginary bell rope would be pulled downward.

There is material for sixteen groups, and children of almost any age will enjoy this eighteenth century rhyme—

## THE BELLS OF LONDON

*Gay go up and gay go down  
To ring the bells of London Town.*

*Oranges and lemons,  
Say the bells of St. Clements.*

*Bulls eyes and targels,  
Say the bells of St. Marg'ret's.*

*Brickbats and tiles,  
Say the bells of St. Giles.*

*Half-pence and farthings,  
Say the bells of St. Martin's*

*Pancakes and fritters,  
Say the bells of St. Peter's*

*Two sticks and an apple,  
Say the bells of Whitechapel.*

*Pokers and tongs,  
Say the bells of St. John's.*

*Kettles and pans,  
Say the bells of St. Ann's.*

*Old father Baldpate,  
Say the slow bells of Aldgate.*

*You owe me ten shillings,  
Say the bells of St. Helen's*

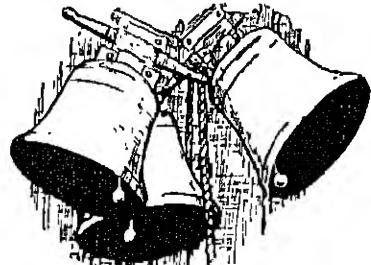
*When will you pay me?  
Say the bells of Old Bailey.*

*When I grow rich,  
Say the bells of Shoreditch.*

*Pray when will that be,  
Say the bells of Stepney.*

*I do not know,  
Say the great bell of Bow.*

*Gay go up and gay go down,  
To ring the bells of London Town*



Another interesting old rhyme which will allow for a little chorus work and suggests variation of method is—

HOP, STEP, AND A JUMP  
*The miller he grinds his corn, his corn,  
The miller he grinds his corn, his corn;  
The little boy blue comes winding his horn,  
With a hop, step, and a jump.*

*The carter he whistles aside his team ;  
The carter he whistles aside his team ;  
And Dolly comes tripping with nice clotted cream,  
With a hop, step, and a jump.*

*The nightingale sings when we're at rest ;  
The nightingale sings when we're at rest ;  
The little bird climbs the tree for his nest,  
With a hop, step, and a jump.*

*The damsels are churning for curds and whey ;  
The damsels are churning for curds and whey ;  
The lads in the field are making hay,  
With a hop, step, and a jump.*

The class can begin to make the acquaintance of the words by making a mental picture from each verse. In expressing these pictures in words, it is very probable that the children will use some of the phrases in the poem exactly as they stand. There is so much repetition here that the words should be learnt very quickly.

Individual children should give the verses, one after another, the whole class coming in with the chorus "Hop, step, and a jump."

A class of 7-year-olds, having treated the poem in this way, finished off the recitation lesson by forming a large circle in the school hall and turning the rhyme into a dramatic game.

### 3. Dramatic Poems

There are many poems suitable for Juniors which depict some particular dramatic incident, and if the story be acted all those children who learn most easily through their visual sense will be helped toward remembering the words. It is not enough for the audience merely to watch the actors—that may only help the class to become familiar with the *ideas* in the poem. They must go a step farther than that and commit the words to memory.

Here is a poem which can be treated by Juniors on dramatic lines—

#### THE BALLAD OF EARL HALDAN'S DAUGHTER

CHORUS: *It was Earl Haldan's daughter  
She looked across the sea ;*

*She looked across the water,*

EARL'S DAUGHTER: *And long and loud laughed she ;*

DAUGHTER: *"The locks of six princesses*

*Must be my marriage fee,*

*So hey, bonny boat, and ho, bonny  
boat !  
Who comes a-wooing me ?"*

FIRST

SPEAKER: *It was Earl Haldan's daughter,  
She walked along the sand ;  
When she was aware of a knight so  
fair*

SECOND

SPEAKER: *Came sailing to the land.  
His sails were all of velvet,  
His mast of beaten gold,  
And hey, bonny boat, and ho, bonny  
boat !  
Who saileth here so bold ?*

KNIGHT:

*"The locks of five princesses  
I won beyond the sea ;  
I clipp'd their golden tresses,  
To fringe a cloak for thee.  
One handful yet is wanting,  
But one of all the tale ;  
So hey, bonny boat, and ho, bonny  
boat !  
Furl up their velvet sail !"*

THIRD

SPEAKER: *He leapt into the water,  
That rover young and bold,  
He gript Earl Haldan's daughter,  
He clipp'd her locks of gold :*

CHORUS: *"Go weep, go weep, proud maiden,  
The tale is full to-day  
Now hey, bonny boat, and ho, bonny  
boat !  
Sail westward ho away !"*

C. KINGSLEY.

On examining this ballad to see what possibilities it contains for variety of method, one immediately notices two or three points.

It is partly given in direct speech but there are only two speaking characters and only a small part of the poem is spoken by them. The rest of the words must be apportioned in some other way.

The first four lines are very regular and when spoken sound almost like a chant. Those lines may therefore be taken in chorus, as the method will fit the rhythm and the matter. This is not true of the remaining lines, which are not given in direct speech, but they can be spoken by one

## ADDITIONAL POEMS

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or more individual speakers, on the lines of the suggestions given beside the poem. The individual speakers can be changed each time the ballad is repeated afresh.

When the various parts have been assigned, it is next necessary to fit the words in with the action. A class of 9-10-year-olds were learning this ballad on these lines. The chase after the maiden by the knight was made more real because the children were allowed to run up the aisles between the desks, and so get some length of space to the run. The action was not allowed to become just a lively romp, because attention all the time was directed to the words of the poem and their meaning. Consequently the chase closed exactly on the word "gript."

Before the acting began the poem was read silently and discussed very shortly. Immediately after this it was taken in parts, although the words were not yet known. To begin with, the children read from their hectographed copies of the poem.

The individual characters were changed after each reading. As the chase gave much pleasure both to actors and to audience, and as most of the audience were longing to be chosen for the Knight or the Earl's daughter, it was possible to take the poem several times without tiring the class.

The moment the words began to be remembered the copies of the poem were put on one side, and different children tried to say it from memory.

### 4. Dialogue Poems

One often finds poems which suggest a certain dramatic note and yet do not provide the type of dramatic action which can be performed convincingly in a classroom. But such poems can sometimes be turned into dialogue and will appeal strongly to the class and bear greater repetition in consequence. The carol "King Wenceslas" is such a poem.

Many children learn to sing this carol without realizing the vividness of its mental imagery or fully understanding what it means. The carol is full of good material for children of about 8 or 9 years of age, and is worth spending some time over. It is possible to approach it from several

angles so that repetition does not soon become wearisome.

#### GOOD KING WENCESLAS

**SPEAKER:** *Good King Wenceslas looked out  
On the feast of Stephen,  
When the snow lay round about,  
Deep, and crisp, and even.*

*Brightly shone the moon that night,  
Though the frost was cruel :  
When a poor man came in sight,  
Gath'ring winter fuel.*

**KING:** *"Hither, page, come, stand by me,  
If thou know'st it, telling,  
Yonder peasant, who is he ?  
Where and what his dwelling?"*

**PAGE:** *"Sire, he lives a good league hence,  
Underneath the mountain :  
Close against the forest fence,  
By Saint Agnes' fountain !"*

**KING:** *"Bring me flesh and bring me wine,  
Bring me pine logs hither :  
Thou and I shall see him dine,  
When we bear them thither."*

**SPEAKER:** *Page and monarch forth they went,  
Forth they went together :  
Through the rude wind's wild lament  
And the bitter weather.*

**PAGE:** *"Sire, the night is darker now  
And the wind blows stronger,  
Fails my heart, I know not how,  
I can go no longer."*

**KING:** *"Mark my footsteps, good my page,  
Tread thou in them boldly ;  
Thou shall find the winter's rage  
Freeze thy blood less coldly."*

**SPEAKER:** *In his master's steps he trod,  
Where the snow lay dinted :  
Heat was in the very sod  
Which the Saint had printed.*

*Therefore, Christian men, be sure,  
Wealth or rank possessing :  
Ye who now do bless the poor  
Shall yourselves find blessing.*

The following notes will show a repeated line of attack as regards method of teaching.

### Preparation of the Material

*The Story.* (1) A picture showing the two figures of King and Page crossing a wild wintry landscape was discussed by the class. Something of the personalities of the two characters came out in the discussion.

(2) An outline of the story of the carol was given by the teacher, who took care to use some of the exact phrases to be met later in the poem itself.

### Study of the Poem

1. *Silent reading* of the poem by each child.
2. *Discussion of the Form of the Carol and of Difficult Ideas.*

*Form.* Questions were asked to bring out the two-part conversation in the carol. The class had to find out when the King spoke, and when the Page, and also to read the answers. At this point the poem was divided into its separate pictures, both expressed and implied. For instance, the first five verses were taken as belonging to the first imaginative picture. The scene was staged in a room in the palace. The Page warmed himself by the log fire while the King was looking forth from the great window. Suddenly the King saw the peasant come into view. He called the Page over to join him. The scene closed with the dismissal of the Page to fetch the bread and the logs.

Four pictures were imagined in all—

- (a) The scene already mentioned.
- (b) The setting out of the King and Page, which was built round the idea in lines three and four in verse five.
- (c) The visit to the peasant's cottage, also gained from the idea in verse five.
- (d) The return in the rude storm.

*Meaning.* The class gave their idea of the meaning of such phrases as: *if thou know'st it, telling, fails my heart, snow lay dinted, heat . . . sod*, and this section of the lesson ended with the explanation of the last verse, which was mainly given by the teacher.

*3. Reading in Dialogue.* The poem was divided into parts for three speakers, the King, the Page, and a Speaker, and was read aloud. As soon as the children felt ready to try, the

words were put out of sight and attempts were made to speak the poem from memory.

When the teacher has experienced the response that children give to poems written in dialogue form, or in a form which can be adapted to dialogue, she will always be on the look out for them, to add them to her list of acceptable material. The following will be found in the *Anthology of English Verse for Junior Schools* (Pitman)—

“The Ferryman.” *C. G. Rossetti.* Book I.  
 “Where are you going to, my pretty maid ?”  
 Book I.  
 “Mother Malloon.” *F. Harrison.* Book I.  
 “Baby Seed Song.” *E. Nesbit.* Book II.  
 “The Spider and the Fly.” *M. Howitt.* Book III.

### 5. Making the Pattern of the Rhythm

When the children reach the age of 8 and onward a variation in method can be given by letting them mark the words of the poem to denote the rhythm. To begin with, verses should be chosen which have a rhythm which is easily recognized.

The children should find the rhythm for themselves (see “The Study of Literature,” pages 89–95). If the verses are written on the blackboard, individual children can mark the stresses—

#### THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN

*There was an old woman, as I've heard tell,  
 She went to market her eggs for to sell,  
 She went to market all on a market day ;  
 And she fell asleep on the King's highway.*

*There came by a pedlar whose name was Stout,  
 He cut her petticoats all round about ;  
 He cut her petticoats up to the knees,  
 Which made the old woman to shiver and freeze.*

*When this little woman first did wake,  
 She began to shiver and she began to shake.  
 She began to wonder and she began to cry,  
 "Lauk-a-mercy on me, this is none of I :  
 "But if it be I, as I do hope it be,  
 I've a little dog at home, and he'll know me ;  
 If it be I, he'll wag his little tail,  
 And if it be not I, he'll loudly bark and wail."  
 Home went the little woman all in the dark,  
 Up got the little dog and he began to bark ;  
 He began to bark, so she began to cry,  
 "Lauk-a-mercy on me, this is none of I."*

As the children get a little more practised, rhythms of greater variety can be marked. An interesting type of rhythm will be found in "Light the Lamps up, Lamplighter," quoted on page 224. When marked, the number of stresses to a line in each verse will be found to be in the order 4, 3, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 4, 3.

If the children are making their own anthologies, the teacher will find that children of 10 and 11 will be interested to collect poems of different rhythms.

## 6. Individual Work

The methods mentioned so far have all been suggestive of class teaching, but poems can be learnt by heart through individual work.

If a quantity of poems likely to appeal to the class are provided, children can be encouraged to read them in silent reading lessons and learn by heart what attracts them most. Then every now and then a lesson period should be set aside to give the children an opportunity to recite to the whole class what they have learnt by themselves.

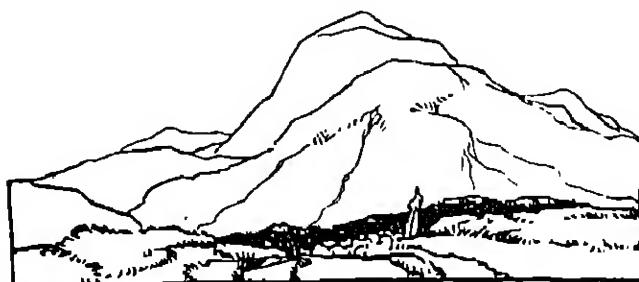
There might well be a shelf of poetry books in every classroom as well as folders containing hectographed copies of poems of every variety.

There are some poems which are too delicate to admit of any definite organized attack in order to commit them to memory. They should be left to speak through their own music to those who have ears to hear. To labour such poems is to injure them. It is better for the children to hear them read aloud, to read them to themselves, perhaps to write them, but as a pleasure and not as an exercise. In time some children will get to know the words and be ready to repeat them. William Blake's exquisite little poem is one of these—

### THE SHEPHERD

*How sweet is the shepherd's sweet lot :  
 From the morn to the evening he strays ;  
 He shall follow his sheep all the day,  
 And his tongue shall be filled with praise.*

*For he hears the lambs' innocent call,  
 And he hears the ewes' tender reply :  
 He is watchful while they are in peace,  
 For they know when their shepherd is nigh.*



## VERSE MAKING

Verse making can be regarded as a natural part of the teaching of verse appreciation. The teacher of the Junior classes does not set the children to make verses with the idea that they will then develop into poets. If there be a child who is destined to become a poet he will probably fulfil his destiny whether he has made verses at school or not. But lessons in verse making have been known to lead to a closer acquaintance with poetry, to an increased interest in it, and an appreciation of it. If this happens, then the time given to it has not been wasted.

Verse making is a recognized part of the study of English and comes under the heading of Composition: it is an expression of the child's thought or emotion in a form other than prose, and can be regarded as a perfectly natural alternative to it. It can also be linked with verse-learning, so that to the children the two will go hand in hand, as a matter of course.

One has met children who have a most exaggerated idea of their own gifts because they have made a few simple verses, but if the subject is introduced as an interesting alternative to prose writing and as a natural feature in the study of poetry, no harmful attitude need ever arise.

The average child, especially in the Junior stage, cannot be expected suddenly to produce verses which are of any great merit. As in other subjects, it is necessary to progress gradually.

As far as space will allow, a few suggestions will be given for lessons in verse making. They have been tried with children, who have responded to them with enthusiasm.

It will be noticed that they are arranged in sequence to show stages of increasing difficulty.

(a) *Couplets*

The 6- and 7-year-olds enjoy making couplets. The first line is given to them and they add a second. They first find the rhythm of the line and fit some gesture to it—either by a movement of the hand or by stepping. When the rhythm has been felt through the movement of the body, the children are ready to find a second line to which they can fit the same

number of movements as they found for the first.

At this age the children are usually very particular that the couplets should rhyme, as words with a similar sound have a great attraction. It is a favourite game with 6- or 7-year-olds to collect rhyming words.

A class of 6-year-olds was given three or four isolated lines. Each child chose one, added a line to make a couplet and wrote it down. Here are some, chosen at random—

*In the merry days of spring,  
Then we make a little ring.*

*In the merry days of spring,  
Then the birds begin to sing.*

*Little children, come and play,  
Come and play with us to-day.*

*Little bird! 'tis time to rest.  
Little bird! go in your nest.*

*When the children's work is done,  
Then they get a little bun.*

The results are very simple but it will be seen that each couplet is correct as regards rhythm. That means that each child has recognized the rhythm of the line given. This, in itself, is an important step toward the enjoyment of poetry.

(b) *Verse Making to a Pattern*

Originality should be highly prized in any direction, but the child who is capable of producing original verses still needs to learn something about the form or pattern of poems. His verses will benefit in quality if he does so.

Many children of 8-10 years of age who write nice little verses might never have written at all, if they had not begun with a pattern poem. It should, of course, be recognized that the work is intentionally imitative and the scope for originality small. Notwithstanding this, to imitate a pattern may serve a useful purpose.

A workable method is to let the children learn

some poem with a strongly marked rhythm that interests them, and then suggest that extra verses should be added.

"Hiawatha" is material which lends itself to this treatment. Its rhythm is appealing and it is easy to imitate.

The rhyme "The Bells of London" (page 239) can be adapted to fit other towns. In place of—

*Oranges and lemons  
Say the bells of St. Clements*

the churches of the neighbourhood can be substituted, each one to give its own particular message.

The verses given below were written when the children were learning certain well-known poems, which may be recognized from these imitations.

By 7- to 8-year-olds—

*A fairy went a-marketing,  
She bought some silver shoes,  
She put them on her tiny feet,  
Then had a little snooze.*

*A fairy went a-marketing,  
She bought a little dress,  
And went to call upon a friend  
Whose name was Fairy Bess.*

*A fairy went-a-marketing,  
She bought a talking bird.  
She put it in a golden cage,  
Then what a noise she heard!*

By 8- to 9-year-olds—

*"Engines and trains," says Timothy,  
"A doll and a house," says Elaine,  
"A big brown bear that can sit down,  
For me," says Jane.*

*"Horses and carts," says Timothy,  
"Prams and dolls," says Elaine,  
"A boat that will sail on the pond without  
sinking,  
For me," says Jane.*

*"A little fat dog," says Timothy,  
"A tiny white cat," says Elaine,  
"A dear little bunny with tail white as snow,  
For me," says Jane.*

*"A silver ship," says Timothy,  
"A basket of pearls," says Elaine,  
"A cave full of shells with a silvery crab,  
For me," says Jane.*

### (c) *Progress in Originality*

The children should soon pass on from the stage of mere imitation, but the average child may still need to be set going before he can offer what is entirely his own.

Co-operative work will help those children in the class who have little ear for music in words and whose sense of rhythm is undeveloped.

With such children, the best results may be gained by verses being written to meet some need. This may arise in the course of the work that the class may be doing in some other subject. Perhaps dramatic work can most easily make the demand which the verse-makers will try to fulfil. (This point has been developed in more detail in the section on dramatic work—see pages 274-5 and page 278.)

The singing lesson provides an opportunity for verse making. Children are very quick at fitting words to tunes if it is taken as a normal step in connection with sight reading.

A class of 9-year-olds was learning a new tune from Staff Notation. They looked at it, read the time signature, and found the value of the notes. They sang the tune to "la" and they hummed it. Then the teacher asked for a first line. "I hear the birds singing" was given at once. It was sung, tested, and a second line suggested. In little more than a few minutes the class was singing—

*I hear the birds singing.  
The bluebells are ringing,  
For spring is awaking, awaking again,  
The daisies are coming,  
And busy bees humming,  
And all the sweet flowers are wanting some  
rain.*

The writing of words for little songs was considered just an ordinary part of the singing lesson.

Helpful as co-operative work may be, it is the child's individual effort that is of the most value. Co-operative work fails in much of its

purpose unless it guides the child to a place where he can stand alone. In all directions, the guidance, whether of teacher or of class, should be gradually lessened.

A class of 8-year-olds was making verses through the inspiration of a picture. It was of an English wood in autumn, with an open glade in the foreground. The picture was coloured in brown and yellow, russet and grey. The ground was strewn with golden leaves. Among the browns and yellows there stood out vivid spots of scarlet, as little gnomes peeped round the tree trunks.

The lesson opened with a conversation about the wood and its occupants. The teacher then gave the children two lines to form the beginning of a verse—

*The little gnomes come out at night  
To have a little dance.*

The children seemed to be a little hampered by having *two* lines given to them, though the picture provided them with plenty of ideas. When the verse was completed it ran—

*The little gnomes come out at night  
To have a little dance,  
And when the moon is shining bright  
They dance with all their might.*

It will be noticed that the children had struggled to make a rhyme but the verse was stilted, both in form and in idea.

The teacher drew the children's attention for a few moments to the rhythm and suggested

that they should listen to that and, for the time being, not trouble about rhymes. In consequence, the second verse had a smoother rhythm and was much more interesting in thought—

*And when the moon is going down,  
They go behind the trees  
And fetch a little magic brush  
And sweep away the leaves.*

The children were then left to finish the verses by themselves, each child writing down her own individual effort.

A little girl of 8 successfully carried on the thought of the first two verses and completed them with—

*So when the people come again  
They see the leaves in piles,  
And think the wind has blown them there,  
But never see the gnomes.*

Many opportunities will arise in the teacher's mind for the natural introduction of verse making.

Nature study will suggest many topics. Where a class is making individual records of their observations of living things, and gathering them together in some little booklet, it is an interesting addition for the children to add verses of their own as a form of illustration.

Free illustration work in drawing can inspire verses, and when the later stage of the Junior course is reached a simple little story which has very definite action can be turned into verse.



## SUGGESTIONS FOR A POETRY SCHEME FOR JUNIOR CLASSES

In planning out a scheme for children between the ages of 7 and 11, the attempt has been made to choose good material from a literary point of view with sufficient variety of subject to appeal to many natures. In arranging the scheme under headings, the compiler is thinking not only of different types of children, but of the different aims that the teacher may have in mind when she takes the lesson. Many of the poems might equally well appear under two or three headings: they have been placed in that section upon which they seemed to have the first claim. As far as possible, the references to poems are named in order of difficulty, so that those which require more experience on the child's part before they can be appreciated will be found toward the end of each section. But in a matter of this kind, only the teacher of the class knows what fits it best, and a change of order may be a wise arrangement. The sections are not named in order of importance, nor is it suggested that any class should cover all the ground included in each section.

Many of the poems can be read to the children for appreciation and can be discussed without of necessity being learnt by heart.

It will be noticed that the scheme here suggested consists of poems quoted in full as far as space will permit, and of reference to books.

The list to which the teacher is referred contains several well-known books which can be obtained from any library and, in addition, *An Anthology of English Verse for Schools*: Primary Series (Pitman), compiled by F. F. Potter, C.B.E., M.A., B.Sc., and J. B. Potter, Books I, II, III, IV.

A young teacher who has not had time to collect an extensive library of her own needs a good anthology at hand. She will find that she can introduce her class to some of the best work of the contemporary poets by the use of this anthology, as well as to some of the older "classics." In both cases the choice has been ruled by quality of the material, so that the poems and verses are of literary merit. The price is so reasonable that it should be within any one's power to bring the books into the classroom.

The figures I, II, III, and IV used in the scheme indicate the volume of Potter's *Anthology* in which the poem named will be found.

The poems by A. A. Milne will be found in *When We Were Very Young*.

### Section A : Poems with a Pronounced or Varied Rhythm

A poem with an uncommon and an interesting rhythm—

#### THE NAUGHTY BOY

*There was a naughty boy,  
And a naughty boy was he,  
He ran away to Scotland,  
The people there to see—  
Then he found  
That the ground  
Was as hard,  
That a yard  
Was as long,  
That a song  
Was as merry,  
That a cherry  
Was as red,  
That lead  
Was as weighty,  
That a door  
Was as wooden  
As in England—  
So he stood in his shoes  
And he wondered,  
He wondered,  
He stood in his shoes  
And he wondered.*

JOHN KEATS.

Robert Burns is a master of spontaneous lyrical beauty. Much of his work is too difficult for the Juniors to learn, but the "Winter Song" is simple. Through it the children can make their first acquaintance with his lovely lines.

#### A WINTER SONG

*Up in the morning's no' for me,  
Up in the morning early;  
When all the hills are covered wi' snow  
I'm sure it's winter fairly.*

*Cauld blaws the wind frae east to west,  
The drift is driving sairly :  
Sae loud and shrill's I hear the blast,  
I'm sure it's winter fairly.*

*The birds sit chittering in the thorn,  
A' day they fare but sparesly ;  
And lang's the night frae e'en to morn ;  
I'm sure it's winter fairly.*

R. BURNS.

The following poem is an exquisite lyric. It is chosen for its lightness and delicacy of tone as well as for its imagery. It should be sung almost rather than said.

#### A BIRTHDAY

*My heart is like a singing bird  
Whose nest is in a watered shoot ;  
My heart is like an apple-tree  
Whose boughs are bent with thick-set fruit ;  
My heart is like a rainbow shell  
That paddles in a halcyon sea ;  
My heart is gladdor than all these,  
Because my love is come to me.  
  
Raise me a dais of silk and down ;  
Hang it with vair and purple dyes ;  
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,  
And peacocks with a hundred eyes ;  
Work it in gold and silver grapes,  
In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys ;  
Because the birthday of my life  
Is come, my love is come to me.*

C. G. ROSSETTI.

"Night" has an interesting change of rhythm which it is good for the children to meet, quite apart from the beauty of the words of the poem.

#### NIGHT

*The sun descending in the west,  
The evening star does shine ;  
The birds are silent in their nest,  
And I must seek for mine.  
  
The moon, like a flower  
In heaven's high bower,  
With silent delight  
Sits and smiles on the night.  
  
Farewell, green fields and happy groves,  
Where flocks have took delight ;  
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves  
The feet of angels bright ;*

*Unseen, they pour blessing,  
And joy without ceasing,  
On each bud and blossom,  
On each sleeping bosom.*

*They look in every thoughtless nest  
Where birds are cover'd warm ;  
They visit caves of every beast,  
To keep them all from harm :  
If they see any weeping  
That should have been sleeping,  
They pour sleep on their head,  
And sit down by their bed.*

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Many of the poems referred to below in this section almost demand a form of chant in their rendering.

A number of well-chosen nursery rhymes will be found in I.

- "Market Square." A. A. Milne.
- "The Rock-a-by Lady." Eugene Field. III.
- "A Cradle Song." Anon. I.
- "Duck's Ditty." K. Grahame. I.
- "The Ferryman." C. G. Rossetti. I.
- "The Four Friends." A. A. Milne.
- "Disobedience." A. A. Milne. Chosen for its fun, but its rhythm is very interesting.
- "Windy Nights." R. L. Stevenson. II.
- "The King's Breakfast." A. A. Milne.
- "Lullaby of an Infant Chief." Sir Walter Scott. IV.
- "Sweet and Low." Tennyson. III.
- "Darzee's Chant," from "Rikki Tikki Tavi" in the *Jungle Book I*. Kipling.
- "The Smuggler's Song" from *Puck of Pook's Hill*. Kipling.
- "Shiv and the Grasshopper" from *Jungle Book I*. Kipling.

"The Dormouse and the Doctor." A. A. Milne.

"Weathers." T. Hardy. III.

"The Sands of Dee." C. Kingsley. IV.

Many other poems with attractive rhythms will be found in other sections, especially under Sections B and C.

#### Section B : Appeal to the Common Experiences of Childhood

There is sometimes a small section in a class which consists of children who respond most

readily to verses which treat of some subject closely in touch with their everyday life. Such children should be remembered.

## BED-TIME

*The evening is coming,  
The sun sinks to rest,  
The rooks are all flying  
Straight home to the nest.  
"Caw!" says the rook, as he flies over-head,  
It's time little people were going to bed!  
  
The flowers are closing ;  
The daisy's asleep,  
The primrose is buried  
In slumber so deep.  
Shut up for the night is the pimpernel red ;  
It's time little people were going to bed !  
  
The butterfly, drowsy,  
Has folded its wing ;  
The bees are returning ;  
No more the birds sing.  
Their labour is over, their nestlings are fed ;  
It's time little people were going to bed !  
  
Here comes the pony,  
His work is all done,  
Down through the meadow  
He takes a good run,  
Up go his heels, and down goes his head ;  
It's time little people were going to bed !  
  
Good-night, little people,  
Good-night and good-night ;  
Sweet dreams to your eyelids  
Till dawning of light.  
The evening has come, there's no more to be said ;  
It's time little people were going to bed !*

THOMAS HOOD.

This homely little poem on a very familiar subject will be found to make a strong appeal to the younger children—

## DIRTY JIM

*There was one little Jim,  
'Tis reported of him,  
And must be to his lasting disgrace,  
That he never was seen  
With hands at all clean,  
Nor yet ever clean was his face.*

*His friends were much hurt  
To see so much dirt,  
And often they made him quite clean ;  
But all was in vain,  
He got dirty again,  
And not at all fit to be seen.  
  
It gave him no pain  
To hear them complain,  
Nor his own dirty clothes to survey ;  
His indolent mind  
No pleasure could find  
In tidy and wholesome array.*

*The idle and bad,  
Like this little lad,  
May love dirty ways, to be sure ;  
But good boys are seen  
To be decent and clean,  
Although they are ever so poor.*

JANE TAYLOR.

There are few children who cannot enter into the experience of the speaker in the poem to follow. Rain can be the cause of very bitter disappointment to children. They will feel at home with these lines.

## AN ODE TO RAIN

*I know it is dark ; and though I have lain,  
Awake, as I guess, an hour or twain,  
I have not once opened the lids of my eyes,  
But I lie in the dark, as a blind man lies ;  
O rain ! that I lie listening to,  
You're but a doleful sound at best ;  
I owe you little thanks, 'tis true,  
For breaking thus my needful rest !  
Yet if, as soon as it is light,  
O rain, you will but take your flight  
I'll neither rail, nor malice keep,  
Though sick and sore for want of sleep,  
But only now, for this one day,  
Do go, dear rain ! do go away !*

*Dear rain ! I ne'er refused to say  
You're a good creature in your way ;  
Nay, I could write a book myself,  
Would fit a parson's lower shelf,  
Showing how very good you are  
What then ? sometimes it must be fair !  
And if sometimes, why not to-day,  
Do go, dear rain ! do go away.*

*And this I'll swear to you, dear rain ;  
 Whenever you shall come again,  
 Be you as dull as e'er you could  
 (And by the bye 'tis understood,  
 You're not so pleasant as you're good),  
 Yet, knowing well your worth and place,  
 I'll welcome you with cheerful face ;  
 And though you stayed a week or more,  
 Were ten times duller than before ;  
 Yet with kind heart, and right good will,  
 I'll sit and listen to you still ;  
 Nor should you go away, dear rain !  
 Uninvited to remain.  
 But only now, for this one day,  
 Do go, dear rain ! do go away.*

S. T. COLERIDGE.

"The Lamplighter." { R. L. Stevenson. I  
 "My Shadow." { R. L. Stevenson. III  
 "Lines and Squares." A. A. Milne.  
 "Mrs. Brown." R. Fyleman. I.  
 "Picnics." Todd. IV. Chosen for the sake of  
 its necessary moral.  
 "Sooeep." W. de la Mare. I.  
 "Big Smith." J. H. Ewing. II. Special  
 appeal to boys.  
 "Crusty Bread." E. V. Lucas. I.  
 "Shut the Door." W. B. Rands. II.  
 "Noise." J. Pope. III.  
 "From a Railway Carriage." R. L. Stevenson.  
 II.  
 "The Clothes Line." C. D. Cole. II.  
 "Big Steamers." A School History of England.  
 Kipling.  
 "The Camel's Hump." Just So Stories.  
 Kipling.

### Section C: Poems which contain the Element of a Story

Children under 9 are too young to learn poems of great length. Though they may enjoy some of the ballad poems, one should consider if, by introducing them at such an early age, one is not lessening the chance of full appreciation to come later. Ballads are, therefore, left over till 9 years and upward. But any scheme for children under 9 should include many poems which suggest a story.

This poem gives material for a story woven

round a very definite personality. In addition it contains very vivid imagery.

MEG MERRILEES

*Old Meg she was a gipsy,  
 And lived upon the moors ;  
 Her bed it was the brown heath turf,  
 Her house was out of doors.*

*Her apples were swart blackberries,  
 Her currants pods o' broom ;  
 Her wine was dew of the wild white rose,  
 Her book a churchyard tomb.*

*Her brothers were the craggy hills,  
 Her sisters larchen trees—  
 Alone with her great family  
 She lived as she did please.*

*No breakfast had she many a morn,  
 No dinner many a noon,  
 And 'stead of supper she would stare  
 Full hard against the moon.*

*But every morn of woodbine fresh  
 She made her garlanding,  
 And every night the dark glen yew  
 She wove, and she would sing.*

*And with her fingers old and bryren  
 She plaited mats o' rushes,  
 And gave them to the cottagers  
 She met among the bushes.*

*Old Meg was brave as Margaret Queen  
 And tall as Amazon ;  
 An old red blanket cloak she wore ;  
 A chip-hat had she on.  
 God rest her aged bones somewhere—  
 She died full long agone !*

JOHN KEATS.

A poem which has a special appeal for the older boys, both for its matter and its rhythm, is—

### A DUTCH PICTURE

*Simon Danz has come home again,  
 From cruising about with his buccaneers ;  
 He has singed the beard of the King of Spain,  
 And carried away the Dean of Jean  
 And sold him in Algiers.*

*In his house by the Maese, with its roof of tiles,  
And weathercocks flying aloft in the air,  
There are silver tankards of antique styles,  
Plunder of convent and castle, and piles  
Of carpets rich and rare.*

*In his tulip-garden there by the town,  
Overlooking the sluggish stream,  
With his Moorish cap and dressing-gown,  
The old sea-captain, hale and brown,  
Walks in a waking dream.*

*A smile in his grey mustachio turks  
Whene'er he thinks of the King of Spain,  
And the listed tulips look like Turks,  
And the silent gardener as he works  
Is changed to the Dean of Jean.*

*The windmills on the outermost  
Verge of the landscape in the haze  
To him are towers on the Spanish coast,  
With whiskered sentinels at their post,  
Though this is the river Maese.*

*But when the winter rains begin,  
He sits and smokes by the blazing brands,  
And old sea-faring men come in,  
Goat-bearded, grey, and with double chin,  
And rings upon their hands.*

*They sit there in the shadow and shine  
Of the flickering fire of the winter night :  
Figures in colour and design  
Like those by Rembrandt of the Rhine,  
Half darkness and half light.*

*And they talk of ventures lost and won,  
And their talk is ever and ever the same,  
While they drink the red wine of Tarragon,  
From the cellars of some Spanish Don,  
Or convent set on flame.*

*Restless at times with heavy strides  
He paces his parlour to and fro ;  
He is like a ship that at anchor rides,  
And swings with the rising and falling of tides,  
And tugs at her anchor-haw.*

*Voices mysterious far and near,  
Sound of the wind and sound of the sea,  
Are calling and whispering in his ear,  
"Simon Danz ! Why stayest thou here ?  
Come forth and follow me !"*

*So he thinks he shall take to the sea again  
For one more cruise with his buccaneers,  
To singe the beard of the King of Spain,  
And capture another Dean of Jean  
And sell him in Algiers.*

LONGFELLOW.

"The Fairy Tailor." *R. Fyleman.* II.  
The following two are chosen because they appeal to children's humour.

"Wynken, Blynken, and Nod." *Eugene Field.*  
I.

"The Owl and the Pussy Cat." *Edward Lear.*  
II.

"The Faeries." *W. Allingham.* I.  
"Pied Piper of Hamelin." *R. Browning.* IV.  
"The Wraggle Tagle Gipsies." II.

"Eddi's Service," from *Rewards and Faeries*.  
*Kipling.* To be used when the class is learning, in history, the story of the settlement of the Saxons in England.

"Hiawatha." *Longfellow.* To accompany the geography lesson on the Red Indians when the class is learning of life in the temperate forest regions.

"The Miller of the Dee." *Mackay.* III.

"The Clown's Courtship." III.

"The Beggar Maid." *Tennyson.* IV.

"Bad Sir Brian Botany." *A. A. Milne.* Special appeal to boys.

"Song of the Wooden-Legged Fiddler." A. Noyes. Special appeal to boys. II.

Ballad Poems: "Lord Ullin's Daughter." IV.  
"Sherwood." A. Noyes. IV.

"The Song of the Western Men." *R. S. Hawker.* IV.

"Lays of Ancient Rome." *Macaulay.* To be taken in relation to the story of Horatius.

Parts of "Evangeline" and some of the "Tales of a Wayside Inn," by *Longfellow*.

"The Jackdaw of Rheims," from *The Ingoldsby Legends*. *Barham*.

#### Section D: Appeal to Imagination and Feeling, and in Some Cases with a Special Appeal to Thought

This section will be found to include many poems which are rich in mental imagery and can be used to stimulate imagination.

## THE PRACTICAL JUNIOR TEACHER

## GRASSHOPPER GREEN

*Grasshopper green is a comical chap;  
He lives on the best of fare.  
Bright little trousers, jacket, and cap,  
These are his summer wear.  
Out in the meadows he loves to go,  
Playing away in the sun;  
It's hopperty, skipperty, high and low,  
Summer's the time for fun.*

*Grasshopper green has a quaint little house;  
It's under the hedge so gay.  
Grandmother Spider, as still as a mouse,  
Watches him over the way.  
Gladly he's calling the children, I know,  
Out in the beautiful sun;  
It's hopperty, skipperty, high and low,  
Summer's the time for fun.*

ANON.

## A CHARM

*In the morning when you rise  
Wash your hands and cleanse your eyes,  
Next be sure you have a care  
To disperse the water far;  
For, as far as it doth light,  
So far keeps the evil sprite.*

R. HERRICK.

Humorous poems are appreciated by the children. Experience has proved that children enjoy the story of

## THE OLD MAN AND HIS WIFE

*There was an old man who lived in a wood,  
As you may plainly see,  
He said he could do as much work in a day  
As his wife could do in three.  
"With all my heart," the old woman said,  
"If that you will allow,  
To-morrow you'll stay at home in my stead,  
And I'll go drive the plough.*

*"But you must milk Tidy the cow,  
For fear that she go dry;  
And you must feed the little pigs  
That are within the sty,  
And you must mind the speckled hen,  
For fear she lay astray;  
And you must reel the spool of yarn  
That I spun yesterday."*

*The old woman took a staff in her hand,  
And went to drive the plough;  
The old man took a pail in his hand,  
And went to milk the cow.  
But Tidy flinched, and Tidy flinched,  
And Tidy broke his nose,  
And Tidy gave him such a blow,  
That the blood ran down to his toes.*

*"Hi, Tidy! ho, Tidy! hi, Tidy!  
Tidy! stand thou still;  
If ever I milk you, Tidy, again,  
'Twill be sore against my will."  
He went to feed the little pigs,  
That ran within the sty;  
He hit his head against the beam  
And he made the blood to fly.*

*He went to mind the speckled hen,  
For fear she'd lay astray;  
And he forgot the spool of yarn  
His wife spun yesterday.  
So he swore by the sun, the moon, and stars,  
And the green leaves on the tree,  
If his wife didn't do a day's work in her life,  
She should ne'er be ruled by he.*

ANON.

A sense of fun will be aroused by—

## THE PIGTAIL

*There lived a sage in days of yore,  
And he a handsome pigtail wore;  
But wondered much and sorrowed more,  
Because it hung behind him.*

*He mused upon this curious case,  
And swore he'd change the pigtail's place,  
And have it hanging at his face,  
Not dangling there behind him.*

*Says he, "The mystery I've found—  
I'll turn me round"—he turned him round;  
But still it hung behind him.*

*Then round and round, and out and in,  
All day the puzzled sage did spin;  
In vain—it mattered not a pin—  
The pigtail hung behind him.*

And right and left, and round about,  
And up and down, and in and out,  
He turned; but still the pigtail stout  
Hung steadily behind him.

And though his efforts never slack,  
And though he twist, and twirl, and tack,  
Alas! still faithful to his back,  
The pigtail hangs behind him.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

The following poem will stir the imagination and also provide something to think about. It can be read or spoken in three parts: the Men of Gotham, Care, and the Questioner.

THREE MEN OF GOTHAM

"Seamen three! What men be ye?"  
—"Gotham's three wise men we be."  
—"Whither in your bowl so free?"  
—"To rake the moon from out the sea.  
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.  
And our ballast is old wine,—  
—And your ballast is old wine."  
  
"Who art thou, so fast adrift?"  
—"I am he they call Old Care."  
—"Here on board we will thee lift."  
—"No: I may not enter there."  
—"Wherefore so?"—"Tis Jove's decree,  
In a bowl Care may not be,  
In a bowl Care may not be."  
  
—"Fear ye not the waves that roll?"  
—"No: in charmed bowl we swim."  
—"What the charm that floats the bowl?"  
—"Water may not pass the brim.  
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.  
And our ballast is old wine.—  
—And your ballast is old wine."

T. L. PEACOCK.

Children should sometimes meet a poem which, at first sight, seems to be a simple description and yet has a good deal of thought behind it. With a little free discussion, the ideas that lie behind the description will be understood—

PRAISE FOR SPRING

God make my spirit glad and gay,  
Because just now I chanced to hear  
What glorified a common day—  
The first loud blackbird of the year.

God let me pray and sing to-night—  
This morning in an idle hour,  
I saw within a straying light  
A patch of aconite in flower.

God make me wonder, though a child,  
What secret store I, too, may bring  
When all the world is stirred and wild  
With the fine mystery of spring.

Faint leaves upon a lilac tree,  
Each catkin just a glowing ball,  
Another spring abroad for me—  
God give me grace to find it all.

FLORENCE BONE.

"Some One." *W. de la Mare*. I.  
"The Pedlar's Caravan." *W. B. Rands*. II.  
"The Land of Story Books." *R. L. Stevenson*. I.  
"Mr. Nobody." I.  
"Mother Malloon." *F. Harrison*. I. (For two speakers.)  
"A Fairy Went a-Marketing." *R. Fyleman*. II.  
"To the Lady Bird." *Mrs. Montgomery*. I.  
"Seven Times One." *Jean Ingelow*. I.  
"Queen Mab." *T. Hood*. II.  
"The Puk-Wudjies." *P. R. Chalmers*. II.  
"In Normandy." *E. V. Lucas*. II.  
"The King of China's Daughter." *E. Sitwell*. I.  
"Nod." *W. de la Mare*. III.  
"The Children's Bells." *E. Farjeon*. III.  
"In France." *F. Cornford*. III.  
"The Tortoiseshell Cat." *P. R. Chalmers*. III.  
"Tillie." *W. de la Mare*. II.  
"A Plain Direction." *T. Hood*. III.  
"The Cottager to her Infant." *Dorothy Wordsworth*. II.  
"Hay Harvest." *P. R. Chalmers*. IV.  
"The Way Through the Woods," from  
"Rewards and Fairies." *Kipling*. (Its note of mystery is very attractive.)  
"The Slave's Dream." *Longfellow*.  
Selections from "The Building of the Ship." *Longfellow*.  
"Roundabouts and Swings." *P. R. Chalmers*. IV.  
"When Icicles Hang by the Wall." *Shakespeare*. (Potter Anthology, Senior Book I.)  
"Over Hill, Over Dale." *Shakespeare*. IV.  
"A Fairy Lullaby." *Shakespeare*. IV.

"Songs of Ariel," *Shakespeare*. IV.  
 "The Falcon," IV.  
 "The Tiger," *Wm. Blake*. IV.  
 "November Blue," *A. Meynell*. IV.

### Section E: To Illustrate Work in Nature Study

The poems quoted and named below can be used not merely to interest the children in Nature in a general way, but in many instances to guide their observation to some definite fact. It is hoped that the selection will be found of use in Nature study lessons, as well as in the literature lesson.

Juniors show a great interest in lessons on birds. Even in town schools it is possible, through stuffed specimens and through pictures, to give the children some knowledge of bird life. But, however well taught, such lessons will lack the sense of movement and freedom that they would have if given in the country where birds can be studied at first hand. There are many poems which can be introduced into the Nature lesson which will help to some extent to stir imagination, and to bring into the classroom that feeling of life and movement which is so badly needed.

CUCKOO SONG  
*Cuckoo, cuckoo,*  
*What do you do?*  
*In April*  
*I open my bill;*  
*In May*  
*I sing night and day;*  
*In June*  
*I change my tune;*  
*In July*  
*Away I fly;*  
*In August*  
*Away I must.*

ANON.

#### THE LITTLE LARK

Question. *I hear a pretty bird, but hark!*  
*I cannot see it anywhere.*  
*Oh! it is a little lark,*  
*Singing in the morning air.*  
*Little lark, do tell me why*  
*You are singing in the sky?*

*Other little birds at rest*  
*Have not yet begun to sing;*  
*Every one is in its nest,*  
*With its head behind its wing;*  
*Little lark, then, tell me why*  
*You're so early in the sky?*

*You look no bigger than a bee,*  
*In the middle of the blue;*  
*Up above the poplar tree,*  
*I can hardly look at you:*  
*Little lark, do tell me why*  
*You are mounted up so high?*

Answer. *'Tis to watch the silver star,*  
*Sinking slowly in the skies;*  
*And, beyond the mountain far,*  
*See the glorious sun arise:*  
*Little lady, this is why*  
*I am mounted up so high.*

*'Tis to sing a merry song*  
*To the pleasant morning light;*  
*Why stay in my nest so long,*  
*When the sun is shining bright?*  
*Little lady, this is why*  
*I sing so early in the sky.*

*To the little birds below,*  
*I do sing a merry tune;*  
*And I let the ploughman know*  
*He must come to labour soon.*  
*Little lady, this is why*  
*I am singing in the sky.*

JANE AND ANN TAYLOR.

Other bird poems will be found in the list at the end of Section E.

Many poems can be found to illustrate the change of the season.

#### OXFORDSHIRE CHILDREN'S MAY SONG

*Spring is coming, spring is coming,*  
*Birdies, build your nest;*  
*Weave together straw and feather,*  
*Doing each your best.*

*Spring is coming, spring is coming,*  
*Flowers are coming too:*  
*Pansies, lilies, daffodillies,*  
*Now are coming through.*

*Spring is coming, spring is coming,  
All around is fair;  
Shimmer and quiver on the river,  
Joy is everywhere.*

*We wish you a happy May.*

COUNTRY RHYME.

GOOD-NIGHT TO A GARDEN  
*Lady Larch, will you look down?  
I'm the Queen of all the town,  
Give me tassels for my crown.*

SILVER BIRCH, WILL YOU BE MINE,  
*Oak and willow, beech and pine?  
Royal weather's always fine.*

DAISY, PEEPING FROM THE GRASS,  
*Buttercup, you bonny lass,  
Will you curtsey when I pass?*

HUSH! THE LITTLE BIRDS ARE FED,  
*And the sky is turning red,  
Even Queens must go to bed—  
So—Good-night!*

FLORENCE BONE.

Some poems reveal a very detailed and careful study of Nature and deserve close observation. This is true of the exquisite little poem which tells of the signs of Autumn—

AUTUMN

*The feathers of the willow  
Are half of them grown yellow  
Above the swelling stream;  
And ragged are the bushes,  
And rusty now the rushes,  
And wild the clouded gleam.*

*The thistle now is older,  
His stalk begins to moulder,  
His head is white as snow;  
The branches all are barer,  
The linnet's song is rarer,  
The robin pipeth now.*

DIXON.

The next poem will appeal to the more imaginative children in the older group—

A DREAM

*Once a dream did weave a shade  
O'er my angel-guarded bed,  
That an emmet<sup>1</sup> lost its way  
Where on grass methought I lay.*

*Troubled, wildered, and forlorn,  
Dark, benighted, travel-worn,  
Over many a tangled spray,  
All heart-broke, I heard her say :*

*"Oh, my children, do they cry,  
Do they hear their father sigh?  
Now they look abroad to see,  
Now return and weep for me."*

*Pitying, I dropped a tear :  
But I saw a glow-worm near,  
Who replied, "What wailing wight  
Calls the watchman of the night?"*

*"I am set to light the ground,  
While the beetle goes his round :  
Follow now the beetle's hum;  
Little wanderer, hie thee home!"*

WILLIAM BLAKE.

"Little Trotty Wagtail." *J. Clare.* III.  
"Baby Seed Song." *Nesbit.* II.  
"The Field Daisy." *J. Taylor.* II.  
"Spring Song." *Wm. Blake.* I.  
"Cradle Song—What does Little Birdie Say?"  
*Tennyson.* I.  
"A Friend in the Garden." *Mrs. Ewing.* III.  
"Who has Seen the Wind?" *C. G. Rossetti.* I.  
"Child's Song in Spring." *Nesbit.* III.  
"Daffydowndilly." *A. A. Milne.*  
"Trees." *Sara Coleridge.* (Quoted in full on page 234.)  
"The Rain." *W. H. Davies.* I.  
"When Cats Come Home." *Tennyson.* II.  
"Gay Robin is Seen No More." *R. Bridges.* I.  
"The Dandelion." *F. Cornford.* (Quoted in full on page 226.)  
"Spring Goeth all in White." *R. Bridges.* II.  
"Round the Year." *C. Patmore.* III.  
"The Witches' Steeds." *W. H. Ogilvie.* IV.

<sup>1</sup> Emmet, ant.

"Spring." *T. Nashe.* IV.  
 "Winter." *Tennyson.* III.  
 "The Cuckoo." *K. Tynan.* IV.  
 "The Crow." *W. Canton.* IV.  
 "A Chanted Calendar." *S. Dobell.* III.  
 "On a Dark Road." *R. Herrick.* III.  
 "Nicholas Nye." *W. de la Mare.* IV.  
 "Spring." *Shakespeare.* IV.  
 "April's Charms." *W. H. Davies.* IV.  
 "Check." *J. Stephens.* III.  
 "Vespers." *T. E. Brown.* IV.

*Section F: Poems for Illustration by Drawing or by Colour*

It is suggested that some of these poems should be used for purposes of illustration only, without any idea that the children should memorize them. While the children are young they have little hesitation in trying to draw pictures which include human figures and animals.

Poems which provide material for a short series of pictures will be valued for those children who are making progress in drawing. Such material will be found in—

**STORY OF JOHNNY HEAD-IN-AIR**

Picture I. *As he trudged along to school,  
 It was always Johnny's rule  
 To be looking at the sky  
 And the clouds that floated by;  
 But what just behind him lay,  
 In his way,  
 Johnny never thought about;  
 So that everyone cried out :  
 "Look at little Johnny there,  
 Little Johnny Head-in-Air!"*

Picture II. *Running just in Johnny's way,  
 Came a little dog one day;  
 Johnny's eyes were still astray  
 Up on high,  
 In the sky;  
 And he never heard them cry :  
 "Johnny, mind, the dog is nigh!"  
 Bump!  
 Bump!  
 Down they fell with such a thump,  
 Dog and Johnny in a lump!*

Picture III. *Once, with head as high as ever  
 Johnny walked beside the river.  
 Johnny watched the swallows trying  
 Which was cleverest at flying.  
 Oh! what fun!  
 Johnny watched the bright round sun  
 Going in and coming out;  
 This was all he thought about.  
 So he strode on, only think!  
 To the river's very brink,  
 Where the bank was high and steep,  
 And the water very deep;  
 And the fishes in a row,  
 Stared to see him coming so.*

Picture IV. *One step more! Oh! sad to tell!  
 Headlong in poor Johnny fell.  
 And the fishes, in dismay,  
 Wagged their tails and swam away.  
 There lay Johnny on his face,  
 With his nice red writing-case;*

Picture V. *But, as they were passing by,  
 Two strong men had heard him cry;  
 And, with sticks, these two strong  
 men  
 Hooked poor Johnny out again.  
 Oh! you should have seen him shiver  
 When they pulled him from the river.  
 He was in a sorry plight!  
 Dripping wet, and such a fright!  
 Wet all over, everywhere,  
 Clothes, and arms, and face, and  
 hair!  
 Johnny never will forget  
 What it is to be so wet.*

Picture VI. *And the fishes one, two, three,  
 Are come back again, you see;  
 Up they came the moment after,  
 To enjoy the fun and laughter.  
 Each popped out his little head,  
 And to tease poor Johnny said :  
 "Silly little Johnny, look,  
 You have lost your writing-book."*

HEINRICH HOFFMAN.

"The Balloon Man." *R. Fyleman.* I.  
 "I Saw a Ship a-Sailing." I.  
 "The Pied Piper of Hamelin." *R. Browning.*  
 IV.

"Silver," *W. de la Mare*. (Quoted in full on page 231.)

To illustrate many of the prose stories, especially the tales of Hans Andersen, is a happy and valuable exercise.

### Section G: Poems Connected with Christmas

The first poem to be quoted gives a picture of an old-fashioned Christmas; it is full of mental imagery, but makes little appeal to thought. There is a vivid atmosphere about it.

#### CHRISTMAS IN THE OLDEN TIME

*On Christmas eve the bells were rung;  
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;  
The hall was dressed with holly green;  
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,  
To gather in the mistletoe.  
Then opened wide the Baron's hall  
To vassal, tenant, serf and all;  
The heir, with roses in his shoes,  
That night might village partner choose;  
All hailed with uncontrolled delight,  
And general voice, the happy night,  
That to the cottage, as the crown,  
Brought tidings of salvation down;*

*The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,  
Went roaring up the chimney wide;  
The huge hall-table's oaken face,  
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to grace,  
Bore then upon its massive board  
No mark to part the squire and lord.  
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,  
By old blue-coated serving-man;  
Then the grim boar's head frowned on high,  
Crested with bays and rosemary.  
There the huge sirloin reeked; hard by  
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie;  
Nor failed old Scotland to produce,  
At such high tide, the savoury goose.  
Then came the merry maskers in,  
And carols roared with blithesome din;  
If unmelodious was the song,  
It was a hearty note, and strong.  
England was "Merry England" when  
Old Christmas brought his sports again.*

*"Twas Christmas breached the mightiest ale;  
"Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;  
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer  
The poor man's heart through half the year.*

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

There is something beautifully gentle about the "Old Carol" quoted below. It should be given to the children in such a way that they will feel the rarity of its atmosphere—

#### OLD CAROL

*He came all so still  
Where His mother was,  
As dew in April  
That falleth on the grass.*

*He came all so still  
To His mother's bower,  
As dew in April  
That falleth on the flower.*

*He came all so still  
Where His mother lay,  
As dew in April  
That falleth on the spray.*

*Mother and maiden  
Was never none but she;  
Well may such a lady  
God's mother be.*

ANON.

The sound of the old English words used in the following poem will attract the children. They can try to find the meanings from the context before any help is given to them. This would be used with the oldest Juniors.

#### TO HIS SAVIOUR, A CHILD; A PRESENT, BY A CHILD

*Go, prettie child, and beare this Flower  
Unto thy little Saviour;  
And tell Him, by that Bud now bloten,  
He is the Rose of Sharon known:  
When thou hast said so, stick it there  
Upon His Bibb or Stomacher.  
And tell Him (for good handsell too)  
That thou hast bought a Whistle new,*

*Made of a clean straight oaten reed,  
To charme His cries (at time of need).  
Tell Him, for Corall, thou hast none;  
But if thou hadst, He shod have one;  
But poore thou art, and known to be  
Even as monilesse as He.  
Lastly, if thou canst win a kisse  
From those mellifluous lips of His;  
Then never take a second on,  
To spoil the first impression.*

R. HERRICK.

This beautiful little fragment which is so full of charm and of grace was written by a Franciscan Friar in the Thirteenth Century—

*Sweep the hearth and floor;  
Be all your vessels' store  
Shining and clean.  
Then bring the little Guest  
And give Him of your best  
Of meat and drink. Yet more  
Ye owe than meal.  
One gift at your King's feet  
Lay now. I mean  
A heart full to the brim  
Of love, and all for Him,  
And from all envy clean.*

JACOPONE DA TODI.

(Thirteenth Century. Translation by Anne MacDonnell.)

"Away in a Manger." *Martin Luther.* (To be sung.)

"As Joseph was a-Walking." Traditional.

"Good King Wenceslas." III. (Quoted in full on page 241.)

"How Far is it to Bethlehem?" *F. Chesterton.*  
III.

### Section H: Poems with an Ethical or Religious Purpose

Abou Ben Adhem is a poem which has been known to make a very strong appeal to children as young as 9 years, and to be remembered for long years after. Its imagery is vivid, and, though it is short, the writer has succeeded in sketching a definite personality, full of life. At

ten years a child's social sense is developing, and should be trained. This poem will help.

#### ABOU BEN ADHEM

*Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)  
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,  
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,  
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,  
An angel writing in a book of gold.*

*Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,  
And to the presence in the room he said,  
What writest thou?—The vision raised its head  
And, with a look made of all sweet accord,  
Answered, The names of those who love the  
Lord.*

*And is mine one? said Abou. Nay, not so,  
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,  
But cheerily still; and said, I pray thee, then,  
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.*

*The angel wrote and vanished. The next night  
It came again with a great wakening light,  
And showed the names whom love of God had  
blest,  
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest:*

LEIGH HUNT.

#### GRACE FOR A CHILD

*Here, a little child I stand,  
Heaving up my either hand:  
Cold as paddocks though they be,  
Here I lift them up to Thee,  
For a benison to fall  
On our meat and on us all. Amen.*

R. HERRICK.

#### THANKS

*What God gives and what we take,  
'Tis a gift for Christ His sake :  
Be the meal of beans and peas,  
God be thanked for those and these :  
Have we flesh or have we fish,  
All are fragments from His dish.  
He His Church save, and the King,  
And our peace here, like a spring,  
Make it ever flourishing.*

R. HERRICK.

## ADDITIONAL POEMS

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### A CHILD'S PRAYER

*Father, we thank thee for the night  
And for the pleasant morning light,  
For rest and food and loving care,  
And all that makes the world so fair.  
Help us to do the thing we should,  
To be to others kind and good,  
In all we do, in all we say,  
To grow more loving every day.*

### EVENING PRAYER

*On the land and on the sea  
Jesus keep both you and me :  
  
Going out and coming in,  
Christ keep us both from shame and sin :  
  
In this world, in the world to come,  
Keep us safe and lead us home :  
  
To-day in toil, to-night in rest,  
Be best beloved and love us best.*

C. G. ROSSETTI.

### CLOSE THINE EYES AND SLEEP SECURE

*Close thine eyes and sleep secure,  
Thy soul is safe, thy body sure;  
He that guards thee, He that keeps,  
Never slumbers, never sleeps.  
A quiet conscience in the breast  
Has only peace, has only rest.  
The music and the mirth of kings  
Are out of tune unless she sings.  
Then close thine eyes and sleep secure.*

Attributed to CHARLES L.

### A CHANT FROM "THE TEMPLE"

CHORUS: *Let all the world in every corner sing,  
My God and King.*

SPEAKER: *The heavens are not too high,  
His praise may hither fly;  
The earth is not too low,  
His praises there may grow.*

CHORUS: *Let all the world in every corner sing,  
My God and King.*

SPEAKER: *The Church with psalms must shout,  
No door can keep them out;  
But, above all the heart  
Must bear the longest part.*

CHORUS: *Let all the world in every corner sing,  
My God and King.*

GEORGE HERBERT.

### A THANKSGIVING FOR HIS HOUSE

*Lord, Thou hast given me a cell  
Wherin to dwell;  
A little house, whose humble roof  
Is weatherproof;  
Under the spars of which I lie  
Both soft and dry,  
Where Thou my chamber for a ward  
Hast set a guard  
Of harmless thoughts, to watch and keep  
Me while I sleep.  
Low is my porch, as is my fate,  
Both void of state;  
And yet the threshold of my door  
Is worn by th' poor,  
Who hither come, and freely get  
Good words or meat.  
Like as my parlour, so my hall,  
And kitchen's small;  
A little buttery, and therein  
A little bin,  
Which keeps my little loaf of bread  
Unchip'd, instead.  
Some brittle sticks of thorn or briar  
Make me a fire,  
Close by whose living coal I sit,  
And glow like it.  
Lord, I confess, too, when I dine,  
The pulse is Thine,  
And all those other bits that be  
There placed by Thee—  
The worts, the purslain, and the mess  
Of watercress,  
Which of Thy kindness Thou hast sent :  
And my content  
Makes those, and my beloved beet,  
To be more sweet.*

*All these, and better, Thou dost send  
Me to this end :*

*That I should render for my part  
A thankful heart,  
Which, fired with incense, I resign  
As wholly Thine :  
But the acceptance—that must be  
My Christ, by Thee.*

ROBERT HERRICK.

*"If."* From *Rewards and Faeries*, *Kipling*.  
*"The Glory of the Garden."* From *Twenty Poems*, *Kipling*.  
*"The Lamb."* *Wm. Blake*. II.  
*"I Keep Six Honest Serving Men."* *Kipling*. II.

## APPENDIX

### ENLARGEMENT OF PICTURES

The illustrations in this volume have been drawn, wherever possible, with a black even line, in order to make it easy to enlarge them. When enlarged they can be coloured with flat washes of colour. The colouring should be done in such a way that the principal figures or subjects stand out well.

A drawing is enlarged by means of a network of squares drawn on the original, and larger squares drawn on the paper which is to take the enlargement. The part of the picture which is inside each square is copied into the bigger square. By this means the proportions of the picture are kept accurate. This process is called "squaring-up."

Fig. 50 shows a drawing squared ready for enlargement. If, in a rectangular drawing, the squares do not fit in evenly on each side, it is best to leave the odd piece on the short side. The work is begun by dividing the short side into equal parts.

For a simple drawing, large squares such as those shown in Fig. 50 are quite suitable. For a more elaborate drawing, smaller squares would be better, and it would be simpler to divide up the surface into, say,  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. or  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. squares straight away, even if it left a narrow odd strip down the two sides. For example, a drawing measuring  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in. by  $8\frac{1}{2}$  in. could be divided into  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. squares, and there would be an extra strip of  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. down one long side, and a strip of  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. down the other side. If, in the enlarge-

ment, each  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. is represented by 4 in., then the  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. strip would be 1 in.

Fig. 51 shows the enlargement of Fig. 50. The squares in this drawing are twice the size of those in Fig. 50 (linear measure). When the drawing is finished the squares should be rubbed out.

For a bold black outline, which can be seen from the back of the room, a brush can be used, or a broad pen. The brush should be rather small, say size 3. Some people prefer the flat type of brush with all the tips of the hairs level, which is used for lettering, but it must be of a small size. If an ordinary pointed brush is used it must have a good point.

A broad line can be made with the kind of pen which has a flat disc on the end. There are various makes: they can be bought singly, or in sets on cards, from an artists' colourman or a good stationer. They are fitted with a little reservoir which can be filled by means of a brush, a drop of ink off the end of the brush being allowed to drip into the reservoir.

The line made by this nib is always of the same thickness in whatever direction the pen is moved. As Indian ink is gluey and clogs the pen, it is necessary to remember to rinse the pen or brush from time to time.

Cartridge paper measures 22 in. by 30 in. Continuous cartridge paper is 30 in. or 60 in. wide and is sold by the yard. It can be used for larger work.

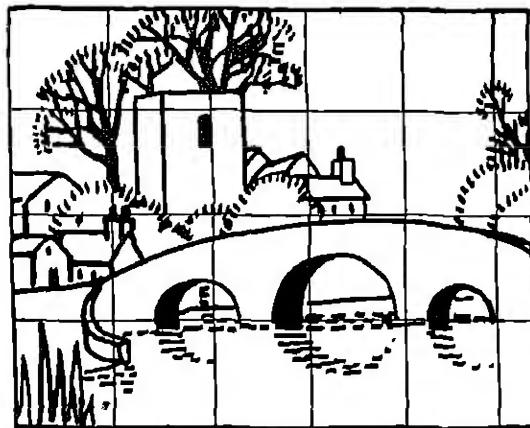


FIG. 50  
*Small Drawing Prepared for "Squaring-up"*

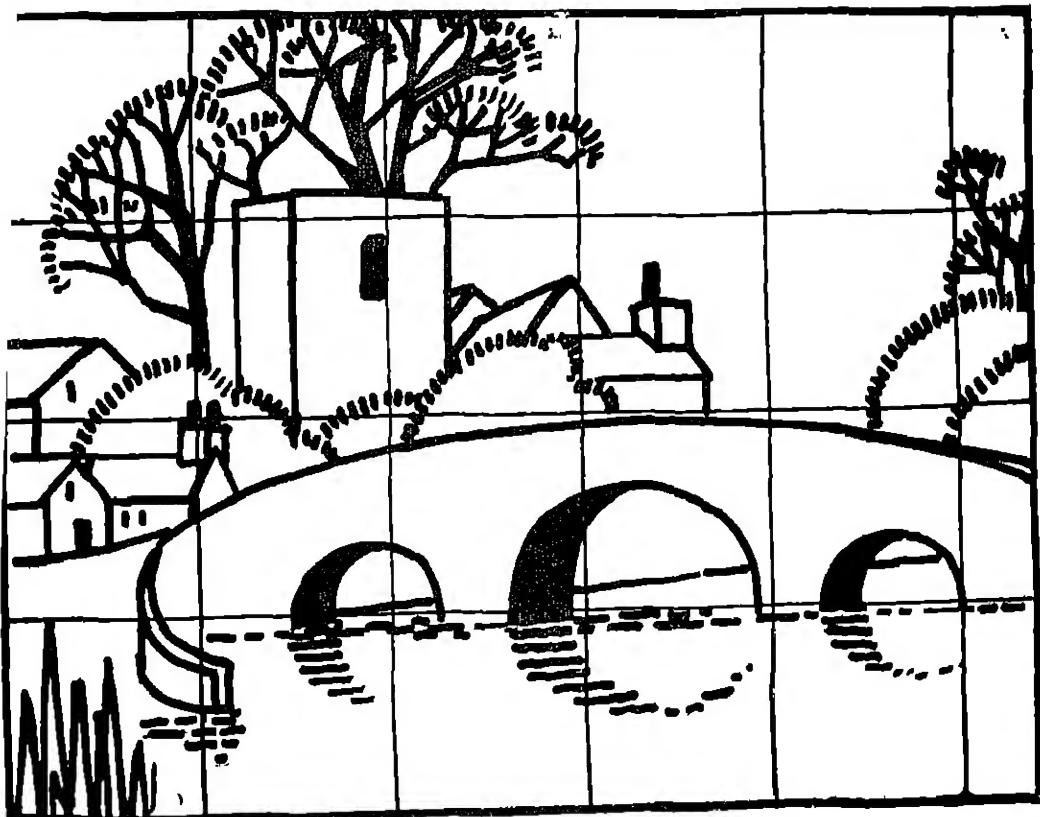


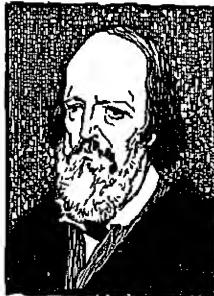
FIG. 51  
*The Enlargement*



CHAUCER (1340-1400)



SHAKESPEARE (1564-1616)



TENNYSON  
(1809-1892)



KEATS (1795-1821)



SCOTT (1771-1832)



SPENSER (1533-1599)

FIG. 52  
*Some Authors Quoted in this Volume*



## DRAMATIC WORK



*"The value of dramatic work has long been recognized. It makes school studies enjoyable, and the writing and production of class plays is an aid to creative work. Dramatization of poetry and other forms of literature should have a prominent place in the primary school. Suitable easy plays or scenes may be selected, and natural play acting will be connected with literature, music, dancing, and handwriting." —THE REPORT ON THE PRIMARY SCHOOL, 1931*

### *I. Educational Value; the development of the Child as an Individual*

One of the most important lessons that we have learnt through modern methods of teaching is that children possess certain instincts which are part of their natural inheritance. It belongs to our work as teachers to try to surround the children with a right environment, so that these instincts may find the best outlet and be developed or modified along helpful lines.

One of these natural instincts is the dramatic instinct. Expressed simply, it is the natural instinct for expression of emotion and of thought by means of action. It is possessed to some degree by each child, and if an opportunity is given early for its use the child will respond with spontaneity. It is that natural gracious spontaneity which is a feature of childhood that we want to keep undimmed, and which, unfortunately, the educational system has in the past often helped to destroy.

Lack of space, the size of our classes, the buildings to which we have to adapt ourselves, and many other limitations that come our way, make it difficult for us to preserve this delightful spontaneity which is natural to the child. This is all the more reason why we should welcome any method which we can use in the classroom that will help to lessen some of the obstacles in our path. The development of the dramatic instinct is a material help to the child.

There is a tendency, sometimes, to give less opportunity for dramatic work if the children show signs of marked self-consciousness. We all know how futile a lesson can become if the children begin to be silly--first by feeling it, then by showing it. That is, indeed, the last state of mind which will help to retain a natural

spontaneity. But perhaps those very conditions which may produce that unpleasant form of self-consciousness may, differently managed, be the very means to help to banish it. Self-consciousness is closely connected with the emotion of fear. It suggests that dread feeling of not being able to make the best of oneself with yet an anxiety to do so. It cripples power of expression, and therefore we want to help the child to fight against it.

One argument against acting in class is that the shy child will not take part, and that an opportunity is given to the more aggressive type of child to display herself to her own detriment. Dramatic work planned with care will, however, bring out the shy child, and put the self-assertive child who revels in self-display more into the background, yet keep her with the full occupation that such a nature needs. Puppet plays will help her.

Two general points are of great importance. The first is never to over-persuade children to act who show hesitancy due to fear. Let the shy child be drawn in by degrees, almost unconsciously, by giving him a part so simple yet attractive that even the shyest child feels he could do something with it. Then if the teacher is alert she can fit him in when the point is reached at which he has the desire to take part. When a fairy story was being worked out through action with 7-year-olds, a main "character" was offered to a likely looking small boy, who refused definitely and shrank away. He was ignored at once, though he was obviously a possible actor. As the play progressed groups of animals were wanted, and when "beetles" were asked for he could not resist the invitation. He was accepted as one of a group without comment, and a little later it was amusing and encouraging to find that some

of the best suggestions came from that formerly shrinking child. In his personality as a "beetle" he had quite lost sight of himself.

The second general point, which will be developed much further on, is that we should let the children dramatize as well as act. When he has helped to *make* the play, many a child becomes lost to himself in a way that he never does if he is only trying to reproduce something written by some one outside his immediate experience. In the latter case the child often relies on imitation and memory, while in the other his work is more readily the outcome of direct inspiration.

If dramatic work is not allowed to be too intermittent, and if it is regarded as a perfectly natural occupation, difficulties will barely arise, and certainly they will not assume anything of the nature of problems.

The communal aspect of dramatic work calls forth self-activity and self-expression, but each one who shares in it contributes something to the common good, and so it may be a helpful factor in the development of the child's social instinct.

It is not suggested that the children must always have dramatic work in hand, but that from the Infants' School to the highest class in the Junior they should become accustomed, in every class, to make a little play of their own at least once a year, and to act it before a school audience.

Work carried out on such lines is not a performance, but an integral part of the education of the child as an individual.

### *Value of Dramatic Work as a Method of Instruction*

Dramatic work, especially when it takes the form of making a play, can be used as a definite method of instruction. Children are always *interested*, and that means spontaneous attention on their part. If we can secure this we are also helping the children to concentrate, and what we set out definitely to teach will, consequently, have a chance to be remembered.

In a limited space it is not possible to do much more than suggest some of the subjects of

instruction that may be involved in this form of study.

#### *(a) Speech Training*

We cannot afford to neglect any method by which the children can be taught or helped to speak well. Good speech demands something over and above correct pronunciation and good grammar—it requires clear enunciation and a well-modulated voice. There is a possible danger in some classes, especially above the Infants' School, for the idea of speech training to be closely connected with the reading lesson but forgotten at other times.

The existence of an audience, however small, will have the effect of stimulating the speakers to reach the farthest corner of the room, and, if wisely used, will make for clear speaking without shouting.

#### *(b) English*

1. *Vocabulary.* If a play, however slight, is original work, it cannot come into existence without a demand being made on the child's vocabulary, and through the general contributions of the class the children with the poorer vocabularies receive help from their companions.

As the children are creating the play themselves the situations involved will be such as they understand. The children are, therefore, likely to have ideas in their minds which, given opportunity, they will struggle to express in words. It is this feeling after words till they are found, by the children for themselves, that we want to encourage. Between the ages 7 and 11 we ought to see marked progress in independent expression of thought.

2. *Composition.* To take a story and turn it into dramatic form would be valuable work in English, even if the class did nothing further with it. Let us think what it means in terms of mental training. Even if the story gains no original additions, it still means that the children have had opportunities for analysis of the story to find its possibilities, for the selection of incidents, which demands discrimination of thought, and for the arrangement of matter, which trains in orderliness of mind. Are these

not fundamental points in the writing of good composition, and will not such practice on the one hand benefit the work of English composition on the other?

### (c) Contact with Several Subjects

The play easily becomes the centre round which other subjects revolve. The study of them can spring up as a natural response to a need. So, out of the needs of the play, we meet our subjects for such lessons as handwork, needlework, art, and perhaps music. Some girls of 12 were once taught machining as a natural consequence of the study and acting of a scene from Shakespeare. It was much more interesting to learn to machine a hem on an elf's dress than on a duster. The girls felt that those elves' costumes were tremendously important, and as a result the machining was wonderfully straight for first attempts.

A play can be based on an historical or geographical subject. This will lead the class straight to individual reading to find information so that incidents, costumes, and staging may be as accurate as possible. First steps in the making of notes through the use of simple reference books will follow, quite a possible thing for nine years and upward when they themselves feel the need for the work they are doing.

## II. Importance of Dramatization

The term dramatization is often misused. Acting and dramatization are not synonymous terms. Each has its value in the schoolroom, and they are intimately related, but they are not used to fulfil the same purpose. Dramatization means the recasting of something already given in narrative form or the development of an idea already existent in some form in the minds of the class. As already stated, it includes the selection and arrangement of matter most suitable for interpretation by speech and gesture. Acting, on the other hand, is essentially the interpretation of something already given in dramatic form. *Acting alone has a limited value.* If we are content for children to act something, of which the material is provided in full, let us

acknowledge that in reality the children in our class are not dramatizing.

### Plays Made by the Children

The 7-year-olds and onward can make their own play as well as act it. Until we near the end of the Junior course it is urged that the children should be encouraged always to act only those plays that they have made for themselves.

Apart from the educational value, one is bound to admit that it is very difficult to find little plays already prepared which are both suitable in matter and sufficiently good in literary style for it to be of value for the children to commit them to memory. Most of the plays written for children under nine lack the freshness and the spontaneity of the children's own productions, and they do not offer anything equally good in place. There is a self-conscious air of the adult who writes down to the children's level, and this often results in very feeble material.

Though the children's home-made play may be crude, let it be judged not on its face value but on all that is behind it. To give the child crude, ready-made material to memorize may do him more harm than good.

## III. Methods of Approach to Making and Acting Plays

Although quite young children can begin play-making in an immature way without any recognized form of preparation, yet there are certain avenues which can be explored, and if the children travel along them the experiences gained will help toward the production of more finished work. As teachers, we should not be satisfied with too low a standard.

It is proposed to expand three ways by which an approach to play-making and acting may be made.

### 1. Reading in Dialogue Form

When the children leave the Infants' School most of them can read matter which is expressed simply, but the majority of them do

not yet read with a good rhythm. Perhaps the outstanding difference between the good and bad oral reader lies in the fact that the former preserves the rhythm of the prose and the latter misses it.

One sometimes wonders if enough thought is given in the Junior classes to this important matter of rhythm outside the teaching of poetry. Speech has its own rhythm, and when it is lost the full force of the words spoken is lost. Good prose has its own rhythm quite as much as verse.

It has been found that the easiest and the most effective way to help these young children to read aloud with good rhythm is through the use of reading matter in dialogue form.

Until recently such material, ready prepared, was not easy to get, but gradually simple readers in dramatic form are appearing on the market. In making our choice let us look not only for a dramatic form of writing but for books which offer material which is worth reading.

If we have no good dramatic reader in our class we can still achieve our purpose in another way.

Many reading books used by 7- to 9-year-olds contain stories which consist of much conversation and a little description. If a "Narrator," or "Speaker," as you may like to call the child, is chosen to read the short descriptive passages, the speaking characters in the story can be given to individual members of the class. A little cast is thus chosen, and the story can then be read in dramatic form.

This method calls for more thought than the use of a ready prepared dramatic reader, but 8-year-olds drop into it with very little guidance. The "Narrator" can be changed fairly frequently to enable more children to get practice without destroying either the atmosphere of the story or the sequence of thought.

In addition to its value as a reading lesson, this method of work is a preparation for both the making and acting of plays.

When the children become a little older and have already had some experience in this type of work, we have the most perfect material for our use in some of the Bible stories which will be found in the Scripture syllabus for 9-11 years. This is the finest literature that we can

place in the children's hands, and if used wisely and well the content of that literature will become much more real to the children if they come to be familiar with it in this form.

Outlines of two or three of the many stories from the Bible which can be treated successfully on dramatic lines are suggested.

1. The Feeding of the Five Thousand.

St. John vi, 1-13. Characters: Narrator; Jesus; Philip; Andrew.

2. Friendship of Jonathan and David. (I Samuel xx.)

*Scene I.* In the Palace. Selections from verses 1-23. Characters: Narrator; Jonathan; David.

*Scene II.* At the King's Table. Selections from verses 24-34. Characters: Narrator; King Saul; Jonathan.

*Scene III.* In the Field. Selections from verses 35-42. Characters: Narrator; Jonathan; David; The Lad (silent part).

3. The story of Rebekah is rather more difficult, but it contains wonderfully vivid word pictures. (Genesis xxiv.)

*Scene I.* Abraham's Home—verses 1-9. Characters: Narrator, Abraham, and Eliezer.

Interlude by Narrator, verses 10-11.

*Scene II.* At the Well. Selections from verses 12-27. Characters: Narrator; Eliezer; Rebekah.

Interlude by Narrator, verses 28-32.

*Scene III.* Rebekah's Home. Selections from verses 33-61. Characters: Narrator; Rebekah; Eliezer; Laban; Bethuel; Mother of Rebekah.

*Scene IV.* Meeting with Isaac, verses 63-67. Characters: Narrator; Rebekah; Servant.

Selections from the *Pilgrim's Progress* and a few of the simplest scenes from Shakespeare are among the fine literary material which can be included toward the end of the Junior course.

## 2. *Analysis of Stories*

Even the 7- to 8-year-olds are not too young to take a simple story and try to find its form or pattern. In practical teaching, this type of work has been found helpful in more than one direction.

We want these young children to have practice in verbal expression, and so we set them to retell stories already told to them.

We all know the dreariness that results when one child embarks on the story, and rambles on and on till the whole class becomes inattentive. Or, on the other hand, there is the child who, in a dozen sentences or so, disposes of the story which we have told with such careful detail. Neither child helps the class very much.

To counteract these dangers and to stimulate the children to retell the story with a better balance of events, the following simple plan is suggested.

The teacher tells the story and then draws a simple diagram on the blackboard to suggest the contour of a hill. The top of the hill is the climax, or, in other words, the most interesting point of the story.

The diagram being drawn, the class then picks out the most interesting and important point, a phrase is given by the children and written at the peak of the hill, and the term "climax" is learnt.

Next the beginning of the story is asked for, and a phrase being given it is added to the diagram and the term "opening or setting" taught.

After that it is easy to get the series of events suggested in sequence by the children in the form of phrases. These are to act as reminders, and are written along the sloping hill till the climax at the top is reached. It only remains to add the conclusion, if the story includes one. The children can also learn that some stories reach the top of the hill and stay there, and never go down the other side.

The story of the "Frog Prince" (Grimm) is familiar to every one, so there is no need to tell the story here.

This story was told to a class of 7- to 8-year-olds, and the completed diagram below shows what the children did with it. The words added to the diagram should always be suggested by the children, and *not* be the work of the teacher.

When the diagram is finished the *gist* of the whole story is set out before our eyes. It is then an easy matter to allot a definite portion of the story to different members of the class, after which the story is put together, one child after another taking up the tale. Try to keep up a speed that will avoid obvious breaks in the finished story.

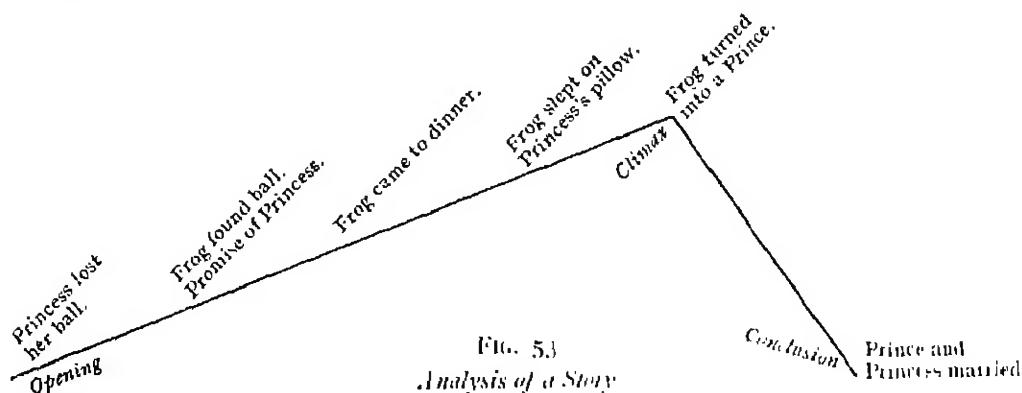
If this device is examined it will be seen that it not only helps the whole class to be interested in the retelling of a story, but it is a means of teaching the class to analyse a story into its separate parts, and to recognize that it has a definite form.

There is no need to go farther and stress the help to be gained from this diagrammatic work in the teaching of composition, or to make more than mention of its possibilities as a natural and obvious approach to play-making. The diagram below shows the story ready divided into four possible scenes. The children will know that the first two events will, together, make up one scene, as they happen at the same spot, and the same thing applies to events four and five.

### 3. Miming

Miming can be used as an end in itself, or as a means to an end.

Some delightful work has been done in dumb show as an accompaniment to spoken verse.



Some of the old ballads contain possible material. This form of activity provides scope for the creative spirit, and it can be developed to a high stage of perfection with practice.

The possibilities of miming used for a different purpose, but one which can be of real practical help, are expanded in the new method described below. At the lowest stage of the Junior school the children are usually ready to act, but they dispose of a situation too rapidly because they do not see all its possibilities. Yet through a mere point of method we can help both the child who is slow and has little initiative to put more detail into his work, and also the quick child who needs to be encouraged to improve upon it.

Some children were told the story of "Eyes of Blue" from "Cap o' Yellow," and were then set to act it. The result was very bald, so to improve their efforts the following plan was introduced. The children acted the whole story in dumb show, while the story was retold to them, so that the acting took the form of a running accompaniment to the telling of the story.

In retelling the story some parts were telescoped, and others were amplified as the children needed it, and the actors were watched closely to see if the amplification led to improvement. This is what was noticed. The story speaks of a child who is making a thorough search in her room for something that was lost. The teacher watched the actor, not just to see how much detail she was putting into her actions, but to see whether she entered into the meaning of the words of the speaker.

At the point "When morning came she decided to search her room until she found . . ." there was very little response, so it was repeated as, "she decided to search her room and look into every corner of it to find . . ." The response increased, but the actor's search was still cursory, so again it was repeated: "She decided to search the room; she looked first into one corner, then into another, under the table, under the bed, inside the cupboard . . ." The action now became full of detail, and both actor and audience at once entered into the spirit of the play. A little later came the words, "She got into bed and lay down." The actor made a

very poor show of getting into bed. It was fairly obvious that although she had chosen to play the leading part she did not want to lie on the floor. Again came the words of the story, "She got into bed and lay down." The actor showed the action of getting into bed but sat up. Again came the words "She got into bed and lay down," this time the emphasis being put in a different place. This met with rather more response, but still with a half-heartedness that took away all reality. The teacher paused to wonder what was the right thing to do—to break into the play and offer the part to some one else prepared to sustain its reality at all costs, or to try again.

The whole point of the story depended on the child being sound asleep in bed, as its climax was the outcome of a dream. If the actor did not feign sound sleep the entire atmosphere was spoilt. It was a crucial point. Once more an effort was made, the repetition being quieter and in a very slow, hushed voice: "She got into bed, lay down, put her head on to the pillow, shut her eyes, and fell fast asleep." The difficulty was met, the little actor responded to the situation, and appeared to be fast asleep.

A few minutes later it was interesting to see what effect this experience had upon the actor herself in regard to detail. As the story went on there came the words, "She got up and opened the door." Nothing more was suggested, yet though the door was imaginary the child went through every detail of walking toward it, turning the handle, pulling the door toward her, and so on, in a very realistic manner.

As the lesson went on it was plain to see that the children were grasping the possibilities of action represented by a brief sentence.

In the incident described above, as the story proceeded places occurred where the children who were acting broke into speech of their own accord. Whenever that happened the teacher was silent, until she saw that it was necessary for her to pick up the story at the point to which the children had carried it.

Where a class is hesitant in speech and it is difficult to get the children both to act and speak, the teacher will find that if she approaches the work as suggested here, speech will gradually come as a natural thing.

Miming can also be used as a means to an end when we desire to stimulate the imagination of our children, and give them scope to use it through the development of initiative and inventiveness. This point can be explained most effectively through an illustration.

Miss de Reyes, who is associated with the Children's Theatre, Citizen House, Bath, has proved that children can invent scenes in their minds, translate their ideas into action, and convey their meaning to an audience, and yet speak no word. The details of this come entirely from the children's imagination without any guidance from the teacher. Here are three delightful illustrations.

It was suggested to two children that in dumb show they should give representations of (1) two old women doing their marketing, (2) two little street arabs, (3) two little girls out shopping with their governess.

Space allows the details of only one of the children's efforts to be given here.

The only properties the children felt in need of were two head-dresses, which more or less resembled what two old women might wear. Quick as lightning these were donned and the actors were ready. Without speaking a word these children revealed to their audience two old rheumaticky women, limping along to do their marketing, and as they went exchanging their experiences of stiff joints and aching limbs. At last they reached the stall. By their gestures it was obviously a meat stall. The joints of meat were examined and weighed and tested in that peculiar way that can be seen in real life by any of us if we saunter through an open-air market on any Saturday night. One old woman secured a bargain to the chagrin of the other, who showed her displeasure unstintingly till the imaginary shopman produced something equally satisfactory, and the two went off the best of friends.

Though nothing had been said the children had produced a complete one-act play.

#### *IV. Progression in Dramatic Work*

The dramatic work of a Junior School should show marked signs of progression, when viewed throughout. The work of the 9-11-year-olds

should be much more mature than that of the 7-8-year-olds, and of a more original character.

There is sometimes a danger of one type of work being repeated again and again instead of developing into something larger and more worth while. Unless a gradual advance takes place the work will not prove to be the mental stimulus that it should be. *It is not acting performances that are aimed at but a method of education.*

This desired development results from progressive methods of treatment. The principle of progression can most easily be shown by means of illustrations from work actually done with children at different stages.

#### *1. Making and Acting a Play: 7-8-Year-Olds*

For this age, the story will be the form of material provided from which the play will grow. In the choice of the story there are certain outstanding points which experience proves that it is helpful to remember.

(a) The children are still young enough to lay the emphasis on what the characters in a story may *do* rather than on what they may *feel*. This fact guides the teacher to look for a story which can be broken up into clear-cut scenes suggesting definite action. At first it is wise to limit the number of scenes to not more than three.

(b) The story should be of such a type that the children themselves can divide it into scenes. A little practice in re-telling of stories as suggested previously under "Analysis of Stories" will quickly prepare the children for this part of the work.

(c) A story which provides a part of some sort for each member of the class is specially welcome. Each young child likes a share, no matter how small, if it can possibly be managed. Many such parts will be silent ones, but they should suggest some movement which will be a useful contribution to the play. The whole classroom then becomes the stage, and an audience is neither needed nor desired.

(d) Though a class of children as young as 7-8 years can divide a suitably chosen story into scenes, they cannot adapt a story to make it suitable for play making, through changes in its

form. The teacher should look ahead and make the adjustment when she tells the story to the class.

These points are illustrated in the following description of work done recently by a Junior class in a short course of four lessons.

The story chosen for the purpose was "The Great White Bear" from *The Story Teller* by Maud Lindsay.

The story was told to the children in full. In brief it tells of a Tinker and a Tailor of Wraye who went to visit the Fair at the King's Town. Returning at dusk, they had to pass the Enchanted Wood. When they reached it, as the moon rose, they began to boast of their bravery. Suddenly they caught sight of Grandmother Gray's old white sheep, which had wandered from home. This figure they mistook for a bear, and in their sudden fright they ran as fast as they could till they reached the town of Wraye, shouting as they went "The Great White Bear! The Great White Bear!"

Their loud cries attracted many inhabitants into the Market Square of Wraye, including the Mayor, the shoemaker, the carpenter, the baker, the blacksmith, the miller's son, while the people who lived in the houses near threw up the windows and leaned out to hear what was the matter.

The Tinker and the Tailor described their experience, each trying to prove his own bravery, but the Mayor felt that the responsibility of the safety of the town lay on him, and that no one was safe until the bear was dead.

The Mayor sent the people back to their homes to fetch their weapons to be ready to set forth to fight. Some brought one thing, some another, while the women brought mops and brooms.

The brave group, headed by the Mayor, wearing the King's sword, and by the Tinker and the Tailor marched forward until they reached the wood.

A discussion arose as to who should enter the wood first. It was at last decided that the miller's son, armed with the King's sword and his own gun, should take the lead. As he stepped forward there was a sudden noise, "Baa-baa-baa," and out stepped Grandmother Gray's old white sheep.

The story ends with much laughter, both

among the characters in the story and the children in the class.

When the story was told to the class a certain amount of dialogue was included, as it gave the children something to work upon later. Children of this early age are hardly ready to invent all the conversation without something in the story to help them.

If we examine this story as material for play making we find that it needs certain small adjustments before the children can be left to have their own way with it.

It has already been said that it is wise to limit a play for beginners to not more than three scenes, at the most. An adjustment is, therefore, needed at the beginning of this story to bring the material within this limit.

In the telling of the story the actual visit to the Fair was cut out, the story beginning near the entrance of the Enchanted Wood. The children of Hull who were being taught understand a Fair, for an annual one has been held in their town for over 600 years, and practically every child visits it when the time comes round. The idea of the Fair was too good to lose, as it would provide material for original conversation. By the alteration of a few words the story began with the Tinker and the Tailor returning from the King's Fair. When nearing the entrance to the Enchanted Wood they sat down to rest on two large stones. The opening lines came naturally out of the conversation which took place as they rested. They were as follows—

*Scene I. The Wood.*

*Characters : Tinker, Tailor.*

*TAILOR.* I am tired.

*TINKER.* Shall we sit down?

*TAILOR.* Yes. (*They sit down.*)

*TINKER.* I have been to the Fair,

*TAILOR.* Well, so have I.

*TINKER.* Did you enjoy it?

*TAILOR.* Yes, I did enjoy it.

*TINKER.* Did you get any prizes?

*TAILOR.* Yes, I did. Look at them all. (*Tailor brings them out of a parcel : engine, cream buns, doll, tea set, ginger-buns.*)

*TINKER.* You have been lucky. They are very nice. Do you want to see all mine too?

TAILOR. Yes. Perhaps you would like to change with one of mine. (*Tinker brings out prizes. Box of chocolates for his wife, closed-up doll's pram, Meccano, big cake.*)

TINKER. Yes, I would. I'll change the engine for the Meccano.

TAILOR. All right, I will change. (*They exchange.*)

TINKER. Oh, it's getting dark. The moon is beginning to rise. We must be going home very soon. We are very brave to be out on a dark night like this.

TAILOR. Yes, we are brave. I am much braver than any other people to stay near the Enchanted Wood. (*A big white shadow comes near. Tinker and Tailor clutch each other tightly.*)

TINKER. It's a big white bear.

TAILOR. Let's run. (*They get up and run.*)

End of Scene I.

The idea of prizes came, evidently, from the form of lottery stall that is so common at fairs nowadays. The articles given are a proof that the work is that of young children. When the play was complete and was acted, the children produced these properties of their own accord. The list was faithfully kept, even to the "closed-up pram."

One of the conveniences of this type of story is the number of parts that it can supply for a play. Every child was in "The Great White Bear," for after the main characters had been chosen, followed by actors for the group who came to the Market Square, there were still all the people who looked out of the windows on to the Square. These parts were supplied by children sitting in the back desks.

## 2. Dramatic Work with 8-9-Year-Olds

A second stage in play making is now reached, and it is well to pause and consider what are the signs of advancement for which we may look. If we are steadily progressing, certain new features should gradually make their appearance.

The children can be expected to show more aptitude toward the adaptation of material. The material provided should be less suggestive in

itself, so giving a wider scope for the exercise of imagination and leading to more original work.

The play may be longer, and should contain a greater variety of ideas.

The properties may be more extensive, and the children should be made more responsible for the provision of them, which will often include the actual making of them.

A story may still form the basis of the material used for the play, but it will be given without any instance of direct speech, so that the children cannot put any words into the play which are not entirely their own composition.

Perhaps it will be both interesting and helpful to take the raw material as it was given to a class of 8-9-year-olds, and show exactly what the teacher and class did with it, and then end with the little play in full.

The class chosen contained about fifty children, and was a C division of Standard II in a town Elementary School—the C division in this case represented the more backward element of the standard.

Four lessons of forty-five minutes were set apart as the minimum in which it was possible to bring the words of the play into being, and let the work be entirely the children's own.

### Lesson I

The raw material was a story of Prince Bladud, a legend of Bath. It was given by the teacher in the barest possible way.

"Long ago in South Britain, before the Saxons came, there was a King Hudibras, who had a son, Prince Bladud. Much of the country was forest, the towns were very small, the houses poor. There were no hospitals; the sick or ill had no doctors to help them to recover. Many kinds of sickness were feared, especially leprosy, and any one who had it was driven out into the forest. One day Prince Bladud found sores upon his hands. He brought the news to the King and Queen, who tried to hide him, but the courtiers would not suffer it, and the Prince had to leave the Court. The Queen gave him a ring, with the assurance that he would always be her son. The Prince went away into the forest, and, after wandering for some time, one day he met some pigs, one of which was escaping from the herd.

He restored the pig to the swineherd, who offered him food and work, assuring him that he had no fear of sores, for the pigs had the same. The Prince became the swineherd's servant, and looked after the pigs. One day he saw they were recovering from their sores. He watched them, and found they were rolling in some soft mud near a warm spring. He followed their example, and was cured, and was able to return to his home in the palace."

The whole story was not given at first, but only that portion of it that concluded with the Prince's departure from the Court. It was told in no more detail than was given in the above.

When the narration was over the children arranged the matter into a sequence of incidents, which were written on the blackboard—

1. The Prince gets leprosy.
2. The Queen hides him.
3. The Courtiers ask for the Prince.
4. The Prince comes down.

These suggestions comprise the possible scenes of a first act, and the children straight away set to work to find words. With regard to actual words the teacher took the difficult position of keeping herself entirely in the background. All her emphasis was laid upon the need for the children to imagine what the characters would be likely to feel. The children sat still in their seats and concentrated upon turning the narrative into dialogue. The first attempt produced the following very bare outline. The words were scribbled down very rapidly on to paper as the children spoke them.

#### *Act I: Scene 1*

PRINCE. Father, I was riding along and my hand hurt and I looked at it and I've got leprosy.

KING. What shall we do?

QUEEN. Hush! I don't tell anybody, lest they'll want to drive you away.

Scene 2 fared better and came more quickly. A child suggested that the courtiers were together, looking at one another and wondering where the Prince was. The class gave the scene as—

COURTIERS. Where is the Prince—we have not seen him for a long time?

SECOND C. No, I haven't either.

THIRD C. It's a great mystery. Let us go and ask the Queen where he is.

QUEEN. Oh, he will not be long; he has gone out hunting.

FIRST C. He can't be long.

SECOND C. We *want* to see him.

THIRD C. We *must* see him.

FIRST C. Let us come in to see him.

SECOND C. I *will* see him, and, if you don't, we'll fight.

In making this scene there was less call upon originality of thought, which may account for the quicker speed. The fact that the Queen could not suddenly appear without more notice or that the courtiers could not leave the stage to interview her unless a separate scene was made did not dawn upon the class, and for the time being the matter was left as the children gave it.

Scene 3 (the dismissal of the Prince) was produced easily, and was rather more original in idea. The first two or three lines are quoted to show a difficulty not noticed by the class, but purposely left uncorrected by the teacher in the hope that the class would discover for themselves that if the Queen (on the stage) is to address the Prince (off the stage) the matter requires definite planning to make the situation possible.

#### *Scene 3*

PRINCE (*upstairs*). I am sure the people are angry. Oh dear, what shall I do? I'll go down and see.

QUEEN (*to Prince*). Don't come; the people are angry.

PRINCE. Let me come, Mother.

COURTIERS. Drive him away.

The teacher could have easily pointed out on the spot the incongruity of this situation before the play went farther, but, in that case the children would have lost the opportunity to arrange the dramatic effect for themselves. As it was they found out the weakness in the next lesson and put it right.

The first draft of Act I was now complete.

The teacher now went on to the second portion of the lesson. The raw material for Act II was given in the form of the bare outline of the story, beginning where the Prince left the Court and ending with his cure.

Act II was left over for the time being to be worked out in the next lesson, and the teacher went on to ask the class to suggest an end for the story, which they did without any difficulty. She then took the mind of the class back to the Palace, and asked for suggestions as to what might be happening there. Thus Act III fell naturally into three scenes as given by the class, and dialogue was provided.

*Scene 1:* The Palace. King and Queen longing for their son.

*Scene 2:* Palace Gate. Arrival of a ragged man.

*Scene 3:* Palace. Prince comes home again.

## Lesson II

The second lesson was taken on different lines. So far the children had tried to enter into the emotions of the actors in the story, and so arrive at expression in words. In the second lesson the aim was to recall the main incidents of the story and let the children express the situation in terms of action as well as of dialogue. The procedure was as follows—

(a) Brief recapitulation by the class, in answer to questions, of the chief incidents in the story. Headings were put on the blackboard to act as a guide in the work to come.

(b) Class suggested the characters required for the play, the necessary stage properties, and the scenery to be imagined.

Large labels were made to show whether the scene was taking place in the Palace or the forest. A label, "The Swineherd's Hut," transformed the teacher's desk, and chairs placed at irregular intervals suggested trees round which the pigs ran.

The words of the Forest Scene (Act II) now came into existence for the first time. Discussion between the teacher and the class as to the circumstances arising in the forest and the likely emotions experienced by the Prince, the swineherd, and the pigs gave rise both to action and to dialogue. Both audience and actors thoroughly enjoyed the dramatic action provided by the six pigs!

As on the previous occasion, all words were scribbled down by the teacher as spoken. The teacher needs to be very quick in this part of

her work, as spontaneity is lost if the children are asked to repeat many of their words.

After this second lesson the written results of both lessons were compared. It was interesting to find that each had valuable features, and the teacher learnt a good deal from the comparison.

As far as fullness of dialogue was concerned, the best result in Acts I and III came from the first lesson, when the children had been concerned with feeling and words but with no action. Yet here and there a more forceful phrase was given when the story was being acted, so the method of the second lesson had its value in relation to the dialogue.

The incongruities of the first attempt were discovered through the second method. When the children came to act they saw that the first attempt had too abrupt an opening, and so the King and Queen were brought on to the stage before the Prince entered, and something was found for them to say.

Another incongruity to be discovered was that the Queen, who was on the stage, could not speak to the Prince who was off it, unless he was sufficiently near it for an aside. And so there came under discussion the possibility of "asides," and the writing of stage directions. The idea of a bracket to enclose them was given by a small boy.

The comparisons of the results of these two lessons suggested that we had taken the right order in our course, namely, to begin by discussion of feeling, and so reach words, and then go on to gesture to find the gaps and incongruities.

When the scripts from the two lessons were compared it was found that a combination of the best from each produced a complete little play, to which it was not necessary to add a single word.

The matter could have been left there, but it was felt that the class should try to work upon its own effort, and develop it into something better. Though the play was complete it was in parts exceedingly slight, the conclusion was weak and very hurried, and in some places there was a vagueness through lack of stage directions. The next two lessons were given to development.

*Lesson III*

The object of the third lesson was to meet the difficulties already mentioned in such a way that the work should be done by the class and not by the teacher. She wished to achieve her aim through discussion of the feelings of the characters and of the situations in the play, and thus through the use of the imagination of the class to arrive at a more detailed and a more interesting piece of work. To this end, cyclostyled copies of the words of the play, as it then stood, were prepared for this lesson. The children were much interested to see their own production written out. The method of the lesson was as follows—

*Revision of Act I.* (a) Recall of the chief points of each scene through the teacher's questions.

(b) Silent reading of the act.

(c) Oral reading of the act by different children, broken by discussion wherever any one wished to suggest an alteration or an addition.

The children were left free to add anything they liked. They could write on the copies of the play if they wished, but as the lesson proceeded the suggestions were so numerous that only the teacher could keep pace with them. She sat at her desk throughout the lesson, and was kept hard at work writing down the additions and alterations. At intervals she read a scene in its altered form, and the class decided if it required further alteration. If the class were satisfied with it it remained as it stood.

For the play to be comprehensive, it was necessary that a pause of time should ensue between Scene 1, when the Queen tried to hide the Prince, and Scene 2, when the courtiers demanded to see him. The children suggested that the King and Queen should occupy themselves with other matters, and that gleemen might be introduced to attract every one's attention. In consequence the scene was closed by the entrance of the gleemen to sing—the writing of the song being postponed until the next lesson.

Act II was then developed on the same lines, but time prevented Act III from being touched.

*Lesson IV*

The object of this lesson was to complete the play by recasting the last Act, and by writing the song for the gleemen.

The children had already felt that it was a dramatic necessity for the swineherd and his wife to be introduced into the final scene, in order that the King and Queen could express their thanks to them for their goodness to the Prince.

The first part of the lesson was taken on the lines of Lesson III. The children improvised suitable dialogue, and thus Act III was recast.

The song was next to be made. The children were asked to suggest likely subjects. Those given were—"brave men"; "brave deeds"; "heroes"; "war"; "hunting." These were discussed briefly and the last was chosen. Some conversation gained the ideas: bows; arrows; forest; go a-hunting; O King, go hunting; animals in forest; sunny, dry, and green.

The teacher developed the next point from the last idea given, and asked the class to think of a line that made us think of something sunny and green. She received "On a Summer's day"; "The sun is shining on the grass"; "It looks so bright and green."

These suggestions were all noted on the blackboard, and we went on to the idea of the huntsman, and now the suggestions included "The King comes riding through the forest"; "The hounds go running on behind"; "We hear the huntsman blow his horn."

There was now plenty of material to work with. It was necessary to get it into shape, or, in other words, to arrange it so that the words were in a regular rhythm.

The teacher achieved this by helping the children to see that they were making a regular pattern. She reviewed the suggestions on the blackboard, and chose the phrases, "Go a-hunting," "O King, go hunting," as hopeful ones to work from. In their place, a child (obviously with a sense of rhythm) suggested the line, "A-hunting go, O King." The teacher accepted this line at once, marked the rhythm by moving her hand with three gestures to the right in this pattern, — — —, saying the words as she did so. Another suitable line was found

on the blackboard in "The hounds go running on behind." And thus the pattern of the rhythm was arrived at, which was—

— — — — — *The sun is shining on the grass—*  
 — — — — — *It looks so bright and green,*  
 — — — — — *The hounds go running on behind,*  
 — — — — — *A-hunting go, O King.*

From this point onward all suggestions as they were given were tested by a movement of the hand to see if a line would fit the pattern. A three-verse song was finally written. All emphasis was placed on the necessity for correct rhythm, and it will be noticed that only one rhyme is evident. (The song will be found below in its place in the play.) It was not possible to spend any more time on it.

(When children have gone thus far with a song, it is interesting, when time permits, to let them develop it further.)

The play was now complete. The final draft was cyclostyled for the children, so that they

could memorize the parts before acting them. The children practised the play by themselves. They discovered a tune to which they could sing the song, and some simple properties were made by them according to their own suggestions. A little boy brought a ring after the first lesson. He had had the good luck to receive sixpence, and he spent his whole fortune upon a flashing diamond ring, although he himself was not going to wear it.

When the children were ready the play was acted for such people as were interested in it. There were many points where the play could have been improved. Scene 1 of Act III was exceedingly short. The children's minds seemed so closely in time with the spirit of the play they had made that it was intended to let each child take this tiny scene and try to expand it in writing. It would have been very interesting to see what the children could have done, but unfortunately the end of term had arrived, and it was not possible to find out. Still even as it stood it meant some careful work for the C Division of a class of 8-9-year-olds.

## PRINCE BLADUD

### ACT I

#### Scene 1. The King's Palace

(KING and QUEEN are in the Palace. PRINCE BLADUD is riding in the forest. KING and QUEEN are talking.)

QUEEN. The Prince ought to be back by now.

KING. Don't worry, he won't be long.

QUEEN (*looks out of window*). Oh, here he comes. I can see him in the distance. He must know it is time to come home. (*Enter PRINCE.*) You've been out a long time. Have you had good sport? You look very sad: what is the matter?

PRINCE. I did not bother much with the hunting; I was worried with all these sores breaking out over my arms. (*Shows arms to QUEEN.*) Father, I was riding along and my hand hurt, and I looked at it, and I've got leprosy.

KING. What shall he do?

QUEEN. Hush! don't tell anybody, lest they'll want to drive you away.

KING. You had better hide.

QUEEN. You must go to your room before the people see you. (*PRINCE goes out.*) I hope the courtiers won't get to know.

KING. Let us have the gleemen. You see, if we have gleemen, the courtiers won't want to stop us from listening to them, and the time will pass. (*KING blows a horn.*)

(Enter a SERVANT, *bowing to the KING.*)

SERVANT. Yes, Your Majesty, what is it that you want?

KING. Send a messenger for the gleemen, please. (*SERVANT goes out.*) Let us look as cheerful as we can, so that the courtiers will think there is nothing wrong.

QUEEN. Yes, that is a very nice idea. They will not think there is anything the matter in the Palace. (*Enter GLEEMEN.*) Please will you give us a song, gleemen?

HEAD GLEEMAN. Yes, Your Majesty.

## Song

*It is a sunny summer's day,  
So loud the bugle goes;  
And everything is free and gay,  
A-hunting go, O King.*

*We hear the huntsman blow his horn,  
So loud and gay it goes.  
The birds are singing in the trees,  
A-hunting go, O King.*

*The sun is shining on the grass—  
It looks so bright and green,  
The hounds go running on behind,  
A-hunting go, O King.*

## Scene 2. The King's Palace

(*A week later. COURTIERS want to see BLADUD and become angry.*)

FIRST COURTIER. I wonder where the Prince is. He has not been round lately playing with our children. I wonder what's the matter?

SECOND COURTIER. Where is the Prince? We have not seen him for a long time; it is very strange.

THIRD COURTIER. No! I have not seen him either. I think I'll go and see his parents.

FOURTH COURTIER. It's a strange mystery.

FIRST COURTIER. Let us go and ask the Queen where he is.

## Scene 3. The King's Palace

(*COURTIERS enter to see the KING and QUEEN.*)

FIRST COURTIER. Please Your Majesty, may we see Prince Bladud?

QUEEN. He is resting just now. He has been hunting a long time and he is tired.

SECOND COURTIER. We want to see him.

QUEEN. You go away, and come again another day to see him.

THIRD COURTIER. I want to see him badly.

FOURTH COURTIER. We want to see him.

FIRST COURTIER. Our children will not rest until they see him, because they cannot play by themselves.

SECOND COURTIER. We must see him, or we'll drive him away.

THIRD COURTIER. Let us come in and see him, and, if you don't, we'll fight!

PRINCE (*in the middle room*). I am sure the people are angry. Oh, dear, what shall I do? I must go and see. (*To QUEEN.*) It's no use staying here any longer.

QUEEN (*aside to PRINCE*). Don't come, the people are angry.

PRINCE. Let me come, Mother.

FOURTH COURTIER. Drive him away, he has leprosy! Go, at once!

PRINCE. If I don't go, Mother, something will happen to you!

QUEEN (*giving a ring*). Keep this ring. Though you are going away, you are still my son, whether alive or dead!

## Act II

The Forest, near Swineherd's Cottage

SWINEHERD and Pigs. (*One pig runs away and is caught by the PRINCE.*)

SWINEHERD. Eh, stop my pig, please. (*PRINCE stops pig.*) Thank you, come home, and I will reward you.

WIFE. Whom have you brought home?

SWINEHERD. He is the man who stopped my pig.

PRINCE. Aren't you afraid of me?

SWINEHERD. Why, what's the matter with you?

PRINCE. I've got leprosy.

SWINEHERD. Well, some of my pigs have some sore places. You won't hurt my pigs. You'd better be the Swineherd.

WIFE. Sit outside, and I will give you something to eat.

PRINCE. Thank you, very much.

SWINEHERD. Aren't you going to take the pigs into the forest?

PRINCE. Yes, I will do it now. (*PRINCE enters pigsty, drives out the pigs to the forest, lets them move about any way. If they go too far he drives them back. He counts them.*) Why, they're all here, but some are better. I wonder how they got better? (*Follows them to a little place near a spring and watches them.*) Some of them are getting better. I will do that myself and see if it cures me. (*He enters mud and rolls in it.*) Oh, my sore places are a bit better! (*Washes himself and drives pigs to the hut.*)

PRINCE (*to SWINEHERD*). It's strange. I've got my leprosy better. I saw the pigs roll in the mud, and I did it too. I'm better.

SWINEHERD. Oh, the pigs are better too.

PRINCE. I shall go home, now. Will you come with me? Don't you know I am the King's son? Come with me, and my father will perhaps reward you for giving me food. If I hadn't come to you I'd not have got better.

SWINEHERD. Ask my wife if she can spare me. But I can't come like this, my clothes are too dirty.

WIFE. I think I can spare you. I will give the Prince some food before he goes, or he may be hungry.

PRINCE. Thank you.

SWINEHERD. You must come as well, or you'll be lonely.

### ACT III

#### Scene 1. The Palace

(KING and QUEEN are talking together.)

QUEEN. Oh, I wish our son would come back.

KING. Never mind, he might get better.

QUEEN. I wonder if our son is dead.

KING. He might come back some day.

#### Scene 2. The Palace Gate

GUARD (*sees a ragged man coming*).

MAN. Do you know me?

GUARD. No! Go! You can't come here! Go away, you're a robber!

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Further Developments for 8-9-Year-Olds

Some teachers say that it becomes difficult to find enough simple material for children to work on. They come to the end of the stories which lend themselves to dramatic work.

As the 8-9-year-olds develop, it is possible to turn to another source of supply, as the children can use material which is not already in the form of a story. This is a further step in progression. The children can take an idea, if sufficiently distinct, and build round it until they have made a plot, which they can then develop into a play. Short poems containing an interesting idea may often prove a fruitful source of supply.

MAN. I'm the King's son.

GUARD. I don't believe you. Go! Don't come here any more!

MAN. I've told you the truth—I'm the King's son. If you don't believe me, look at this. (*Shows the ring*.)

GUARD. I don't really believe. I think you've stolen the ring. Well, anyway, I'll take you to the King. I'll take you three to the King and see what he says.

#### Scene 3. Inside the Palace

GUARD. Please, Your Majesty, this man says he is the Prince. I don't believe it. I think he has stolen this ring.

KING. Is this our son? Do you know if this man is our son? Queen, give your advice as to what you think it is.

PRINCE. I'm your son. This is your ring—you gave it to me.

QUEEN. You are my son. (*To the KING*.) Aren't you glad to see him? I am.

KING. What have you been doing all this long time? I did feel miserable without you.

PRINCE. I have been living with this swineherd and his wife, and I have brought them to show you. If I had not been living with these people I should not have got better.

KING. I thought you were dead. We'll have a feast. (*To SWINEHERD and WIFE*.) Will you come and feast with us?

COURTIERS. Three cheers for Prince Bladud!

\* \* \* \* \*

A class of 8-9-year-olds wanted to make a fairy play. The ideas which provided their raw material came out of Miss Fyleman's well-known verses "There are Faeries at the Bottom of our Garden." These ideas gave rise to a play with three scenes—*Scene 1*, in the garden; *Time*, one summer afternoon; *Characters*, three children and the gardener. Though the verse only mentions the gardener's shed the children introduced the gardener himself into the scene. The class made *him*, not any of the children, to be the person who suggested that flowers have faeries in them. It was he who invited the children to come to the bottom of the garden at night to see the faeries for themselves.

The 2nd verse was ignored by the class: it gave them nothing constructive to work upon.

From Verse 3 they developed Scenes 2 and 3. In Scene 2 preparations were made by the faeries for the coming of the King and Queen. Scene 3 included their Majesties' arrival, together with a song of welcome, a feast, and a farewell.

In the case of this play it was the teacher's idea to use the play-making as a *centre* of work, and to make a natural contact between it and other subjects. Thus the play would become a "centre of interest."

The idea of dramatic form was anticipated in the reading lessons by the use of reading matter which was written in dialogue form. The putting together of the play, in regard to both words and shape, formed lessons in composition. When the play was finished it was made into a little booklet in the handwork lesson, when three-hole sewing was taught, the art lesson having already provided the designed cover.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the work was the fact that it grew out of the young teacher's anxiety with regard to the sight-reading in the music lessons. She was a student in training, and she greatly feared that her lessons in sight-reading would be dull; so she began to plan some way of giving them a distinct purpose that would appeal to the class. She saw that songs for a fairy play could grow naturally out of sight-reading exercises, and so the idea of making the play was born.

The last little song was put together quite quickly. The play was nearly finished. The closing words, to be said by the Queen, were, "These children look tired, it is time for them to go home. Let us sing them to sleep."

The class fittingly thought that a short lullaby should follow such words, so they set to work to make it.

The teacher chose a lullaby with a good rhythm, and wrote the notes on the blackboard in staff notation.

The children sang it first to the Tonic Sol-fa names, then to "la," beating the time until they were well into the swing of the tune. Then came suggestions for words. These were written on the blackboard, and the class sang and tested them; accepting some, rejecting others. From

the accepted lines they made their final choice. The verse ran—

*Sleep, mortals, sleep.  
And watch we will keep.  
So as we leave our fairy ring  
The sweetest lullaby we'll sing.  
Sleep, mortals, sleep,*

At the end of twenty-five minutes every one was singing these lines with great zest.

### 3. Possibilities for 9-11-Year-Olds

As the children progress in their study of play making and reach the age of 9-11 years, they will show more power of attack in the making of plays on their own account.

This work may develop in two ways, independently the one of the other.

#### Group Work

A group of children may join together and through their own imaginative games produce a definite series of scenes with dialogue. The game "Charades" is usually a favourite with children, and they can be encouraged to use it as a basis from which short plays can be developed. If the children have gradually been learning how to construct little plays, at 9-11 years they should show signs of ability to apply that teaching, and to do something apart from the teacher's guidance.

#### Individual and Group Work

The making of a play can begin with something that is purely individual, and end in being a group or class effort.

One way of carrying out this idea is to give a copy of a short story to each child. The child will then take the material, plan it out for a play, and write the scenes according to his own idea and ability.

The group or class, with or without the teacher's guidance, can then consider which parts of the various scenes will be chosen, and they will be put together to make a final play.

It may be helpful to give some illustration of this type of work, as far as space will permit.

The class consisted of children of about 8-10 years of age, and was taught by a student in training.

Each child received a copy of the following story—

#### THE RED BIRD

There was once a Queen who wanted a new hat. She wanted it to be the best one that was ever made, so she decided to have on it the feathers of a beautiful red bird which she had seen in the woods. She called her ladies to her and asked them to tell her where the bird lived; but, although they had often seen it, none of them knew where it lived. Then one suggested that they should ask the children who were playing in the wood, because they would be sure to know where its home was.

The children were playing happily when the Queen came and asked them to tell her where the red bird was, so that she could get its feathers for her hat. They would not tell her, because they loved the bird so much. The Queen promised that she would let them play in her beautiful garden if they would only tell her where it lived. Then one of the children said, "We listen to its lovely song every day, and would rather hear that than play in your garden."

Just then the bird began to sing, and the Queen liked its song so much that she, too, said that she would rather hear its song than wear its feathers in her hat.

She went back to the court and told her milliner, who said she would make the Queen a beautiful bird from red velvet, which would make the hat pretty, and still let people hear the red bird's song. And every one agreed that this was the wisest thing to do.

Having studied the story, each child set to work to write his own interpretation of it, expressing it in dramatic form.

The plays produced were fairly level as regards ability.

#### An Individual Product

The scene which follows is an example of an average production—

#### Scene 2. In the Wood

(*Two CHILDREN are playing.*)

FIRST CHILD. I wish the red bird was singing now.

SECOND CHILD. So do I.

FIRST CHILD. It has got very lovely feathers.

SECOND CHILD. I know that.

FIRST CHILD. The Queen is coming. (*Enter QUEEN and LADIES. CHILDREN bow before them.*)

QUEEN. Do you know where the red bird lives?

CHILDREN. Yes.

QUEEN. Will you tell me?

CHILDREN. We will not tell you, for we love the bird.

QUEEN. I will let you play in my beautiful garden if you tell me.

CHILDREN. We would rather hear its song than play in your garden.

QUEEN. I would rather hear its song than wear its feathers in my hat.

#### The Product of Group Selection

When the different plays were read it was soon seen that some forms of expression were more interesting or forceful than others, so bits were chosen from one and bits from another until the children had constructed the best play they could arrive at, from their own work.

Scene 2 then read as follows—

In the Wood. (*Two CHILDREN are playing.*)

BERYL. Do you know, Lena, I heard the red bird singing.

LENA. When? Please tell me.

BERYL. Last night.

LENA. I should have been there too.

BERYL. Shall we play at ring a ring o' roses?

LENA. Yes.

Both sing *Ring a ring o' roses*

*A pocket full of posies.*

BERYL. Oo-oo! Look! the Queen is coming with her lords and ladies.

(*Enter QUEEN and COURTIERS--CHILDREN bow before them.*)

CHILDREN. Good morning, your Highness. Good morning, lords and ladies.

ALL. Good morning.

LORD GRAHAM. The Queen has come to ask you where the red bird lives.

CHILDREN. What do you want it for?

QUEEN. I want its feathers for my new hat.

LORD KINO. Yes. I will go and shoot it if you tell me where it lives.

BERYL. Oh, no! I will not tell you. I love the bird too much.

QUEEN. If you will tell me I will let you come and play in my beautiful garden.

BERYL. Still we will not tell you.

LENA. We would rather hear its song than play in your garden.

(BIRD sings. Tra-la-la.)

FIRST LADY. Oh! what a lovely song.

CHILDREN. Yes, it is the red bird singing.

(QUEEN listens.)

QUEEN. What a beautiful song! I don't think I'll have its feathers after all. I, too, would rather listen to its song.

KINO. No, I don't think I will shoot it either.

GRAHAM. Let us go back to the palace.

QUEEN. Yes. Good morning.

ALL. Good morning. (*They go out.*)

If a class is divided into groups, and each group has a different story given to it, a small number of different plays can soon be produced, but in that case the children must be old enough and sufficiently well trained to do the work with the very minimum of help from the teacher.

#### 4. To Complete a Play

There is another method of group work, but it is only suitable for the oldest Junior children; the teacher provides the raw material from which the *beginning* of the play can be formed, and then leaves the working out of the remainder of the play entirely to the imagination of the different groups of children.

This method was tried with a number of companies of young Girl Guides. It took the form of a dramatic competition. They all started with the same material, which was taken from an old French Legend and was given to them in the following form—

"Near the frontier of the Ardennes country

there once lived a salt smuggler. In vain the Customs officers tried to catch him in his unlawful acts. The people who lived near called him a wizard and said he was so clever that he could use magic and that was why he was never found out.

"One day he was returning home with a great sack of salt on his back when the officers suddenly appeared. The delighted officers thought they had caught him red-handed, and ordered him to open his sack.

"The smuggler, with a grin, invited them to open the sack themselves. When they looked inside, they found to their amazement that it was full of lentils.

"The smuggler laughed at their disappointment, tied up the sack, and hoisting it on his back went his way. He laughed again to himself as he thought of what the officers would say if they knew that the lentils had already changed back into grains of salt.

"For a long time the officers tried to think of a plan by which they could catch the smuggler. At last they decided on one.

"One day when they knew that the smuggler was absent from home they went to his house. They found his daughter alone, and they frightened her so much that she dared not hinder them from doing anything they wished. In searching the house from top to bottom they found many contraband goods which they thought they could use as evidence to bring him to justice. They decided not only to remove these goods but to take the frightened daughter also. Though the smuggler might be willing to lose his goods, they felt he would be sure to come to find his daughter, and so he would fall into their hands.

"Shortly after they left the house, the smuggler returned to find his goods gone and his daughter stolen. Immediately he mounted his horse and set out to rescue her."

The story of the rescue was left in the girls' hands to be treated as they liked as long as it was expressed in dramatic form. Magic could be introduced if desired. When the competition day arrived, each company acted the play it had written. It was most interesting to see how entirely different each play was. There were about ten entries.

### 5. Correlation of Dramatic Work with Other Subjects

As the children reach the end of their Junior course it is possible to use play making as an active handmaid to history or geography, especially to history. But, if the play is to be of any value as a stimulus to the study of history, the children themselves must turn to books and find what sort of historical setting the play will need in order to preserve its right atmosphere.

Teachers will often find incidents in local history that can be turned to good account for both the study of history and individual or group work in play making.

Before leaving this subject it may be useful, as far as space permits, to mention a few possibilities as regards material that have been tested and tried.

Nursery Tales—"Red Riding Hood." "Three Bears."

Fairy Tales from Grimm—"Elves and the Shoemaker"; "Travelling Musicians"; "The Frog Prince"; "Hansel and Gretel."

"The Pied Piper of Hamelin."

Robin Hood—specially suitable for boys of 9-10 years.

A Nativity Play based on the Christmas Story. St. Matthew II, vv. 1 and 9-12, and St. Luke II, vv. 1-20. The play can be partly mimed and partly spoken, and have the addition of carols.

A play can also be developed from a sequence of pictures. Perhaps some ideas can be gained from the pictures given for story making (see pages 193-199).

### 6. Acting for the Older Juniors

The acting of a play should stand first and foremost for the interpretation of thought and the expression of emotion, and not for a part to be taken in a performance. In this latter direction danger lies, for the play may become nothing more than an outlet for self-display.

If children have learnt to express their ideas and emotions in plays of their own making, they will approach the acting of prepared plays with the knowledge that there is an idea to be inter-

preted and an emotion to be felt, and those must first be found and then revealed by the actors. This preparation will help to place the emphasis, not on the child's performance, but on what the writer of the play wants the child to express in his acting. This development demands more from the child and is a strong argument for deferring the acting of prepared plays to the latest stage of the Junior course. Another argument in favour of delay is that when children reach the age of eleven their appreciation of literature has begun to develop, and a better form of material, more worth their while to memorize, can be given to them.

The children now want to take a step beyond the use of the crude properties which have contented them so far, and in a simple way they can be introduced to what lies behind the term "production."

It is well that each member of the class should have some responsibility if it can possibly be arranged. As the class has not shared in the writing of the play it is all the more necessary to see that each member shares in its production. Opportunity lies in two directions—

1. The making of costumes, properties, and scenery.

2. The carrying out of the performance—there is work for actors, a stage manager, scene shifters, dressers, and keepers of the wardrobe.

A little careful thought will make it possible for every child to feel that he or she is in it. With the younger children it was good to find a play in which all could act, but to do that at this later stage would spoil the work, as emphasis will now be laid on the manner of acting in a way that was not done previously.

The stage is no longer the whole classroom, but has a limited space to which the actors must learn to adapt themselves; the effect of the work will be spoilt if it is overcrowded.

A practical illustration of the points mentioned will serve to make them clearer.

### "A Midsummer Night's Dream"

The work to be described was actually carried out by girls varying in age from 10-13 years, but it is not too difficult for the eleven plus group.

The Fairy scenes from Shakespeare's *Mid-summer Night's Dream* were to be acted.

The first approach was made through the literature lessons. The story of the scenes came first. This was given by the teacher, who tried to make the atmosphere of the play surround her narrative. Much discussion followed, which resulted in the selection of the exact episodes to be acted. They were four in number.

It was possible for the girls to select these

The four episodes chosen from the play were as follows—

*Episode I*—from Act II, Scene 1. Conversation between Fairy and Puck.

*Episode II*—from Act II, Scene 1. Quarrel between Titania and Oberon, to end with the conversation between Oberon and Puck and the words

*I am invisible  
And I will overhear their conference.*



FIG. 54  
*And I Serve the Fairy Queen*

episodes from the teacher's story, and to plan them out in a general way, but it was necessary for the teacher to make the selection from the text of the lines which were eventually to be memorized. These necessary cuts in the text required care and skill. Want of space prevents them from being described at length, but if the play is studied it will be seen that it is possible to cut and select until the fairy scenes stand out from the rest of the play.

It is usually necessary to hectograph or cyclo-style what the children have actually to memorize, or their minds are confused.

*Episode III*—from Act II, Scene 2. Titania and her Fairy Court, to end with Oberon's entrance and the squeezing of the juice into Titania's eyes.

*Episode IV*—from Act III, Scene 1. The Rehearsal of the Play by Quince and Company. This interlude was cut down to the minimum; it was included only to provide a reason for the introduction of Bottom on to the stage. The Fairy Play led on to the love scene between Titania and Bottom as far as "I desire your more acquaintance, good Master Mustardseed," and from there passed without a break to Act

IV, Scene 1, "Come sit thee down upon this flowery bed," which introduced the reconciliation between Oberon and Titania.

The play ended with Titania's words—

*Come, my lord, and in our flight  
Tell me how it came this night  
That I sleeping here was found  
With these mortals on the ground.*

The selection of the lines to be learnt and the rehearsing of the play was only one part of the work. Art, handwork, and needlework lessons were all called upon to take their share. This type of work will grow apace to the best advantage if, for the time being, those lessons can be regarded not as three subjects but as one—the Production side of the Dramatic Work.

The first business was to choose the actors and plan out the general colour scheme. This was done by the vote of the whole class, after which the work was divided among groups of girls.

*Group I* was the largest, and contained girls who were keen on needlework. Their work was to measure the actors, make patterns for costumes, cut them out, and make them up. Unbleached calico was the material mainly used, though Titania's dress was of yellow art muslin.

*Group II* was allied to *Group I*. They prepared the material by dyeing the calico. As there was a gas jet in the classroom hot water dyes were used, but cold water dyes could have been made to serve. When *Group II* had any time to spare they helped *Group I*.

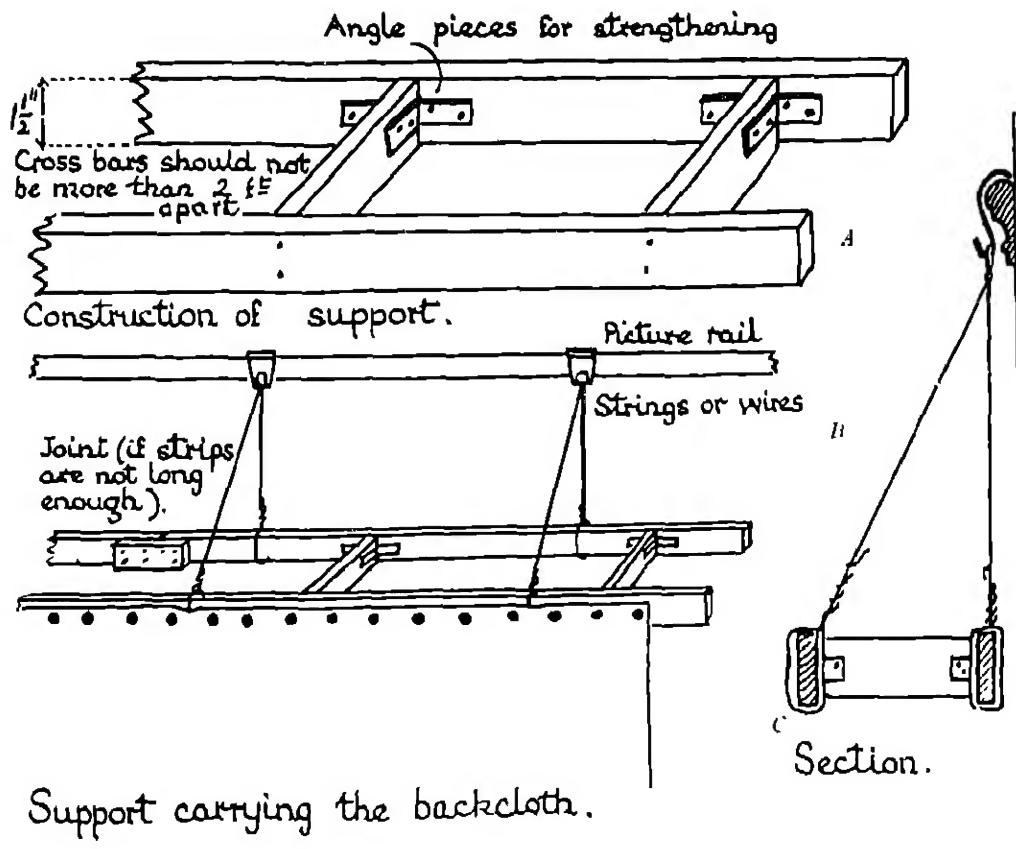


FIG. 55  
A Simple Framework for Backcloth

*Group III* made sandals, any simple head-dresses, or oddments of any kind that were needed as time went on. The slowest girls were in this group.

*Group IV* was a very important one and carefully picked. It contained the girls who were best at drawing, for they worked at the scenery. To begin with, the teacher had to give them a good deal of supervision, but when once they were set going they were amazingly independent and successful.

The scenery deserves a special word of explanation. It is not easy to transform a typical Council School Hall into a wood, so that actors and audience really feel that it is there. In this case the producers not only wanted the wood represented on the "backcloth" so that it would appear as a vista behind the actors, but they also wanted the actors to be able to move in and out among the trees. A solution was found for this problem, and without much expense.

The "backcloth" was provided by using the plain side of rolls of cheap green wallpaper, as money was too scarce to allow of a more permanent one of green stuff. The strips of paper were spread on the Hall floor. The girls planned out the design, and certain trees were allotted to each girl. There was a flowery tree (type unknown), a lilac tree, and various indeterminate specimens. Crayons and chalks were used. The next problem was to find a way in which the "backcloth" could be fastened to the wall, which was of uncompromising white tiles. Fortunately it had a picture rail, and this led to the solution of the difficulty.

A framework was made of stripwood  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. wide (see Fig. 55 A). This is so simple that it could be made by the class. The back of the framework was suspended from the picture rail (C), while the "backcloth" was fastened by strong drawing pins to the front strip of wood (B).

Next came the separate trees. These were made of strips, of varying widths, of cheap hessian. They were placed on the hall floor, the trees sketched in and then chalked, though paint would have been more permanent. The edges of the hessian were not always dead straight, but had slight projections suggestive of branches to the trees. All strips tapered slightly to the top.

To make the strips stand in position strings were stretched from side to side of the Hall and fastened to nails driven into the top of the rail. The top of each tree was tucked over the string, and made secure by safety pins, while the bottom was firmly attached to the floor by strong drawing pins (see Fig. 56).

By this method it was easily possible to place the trees in different positions, and test the effect of the grouping before arriving at a final decision.

Properties such as this "backcloth" and these trees are valuable possessions to have in the school acting box, and can be used again and again for a variety of plays.

## 7. Dramatic Material for Boys

Teachers of boys will find that dramatic work makes a strong appeal to them. When once boys have embarked on play making or play acting, if the material is such as interests them, they will carry it forward with great zeal—possibly with greater speed and with more initiative than girls. They throw themselves into the making of properties with zest, and as they are often freer than girls in out-of-school hours it will be found that they will experiment more readily and produce surprising results.

It is worth while to give some space to the subject of material which makes an appeal to boys.

A class of 9-year-olds were recently hearing some of the Arthurian legends in the literature lessons. They decided to make a play based on the story "How Arthur became King of England."

The legend told how Merlin went to the Archbishop to ask him to call together all the lords of the realm to behold the miracle that God would show them, and through which the heir to the throne should stand revealed.

At Merlin's order each knight came to the great Church, secretly hoping that he might be chosen to be king. There, in the churchyard, they found a great square stone, in the midst of which was an anvil, with a sword firmly fixed through the centre of it. Written in letters of gold were the words: "Whoso pulleth out this sword from this stone and anvil is rightwise king born of all England."

The legend goes on to describe how each knight tried in vain to draw out the sword. Arthur alone was successful, and he was accepted and crowned as King.

To be knights appealed to the boys tremendously, and the second day after the play making commenced, while yet no parts were chosen or

the words of the play were complete, with a little finishing off at school, each character had a complete outfit, including costume and armour.

The teacher set the play in motion as a variation in the teaching of composition. The idea of the dramatic properties was evolved by the

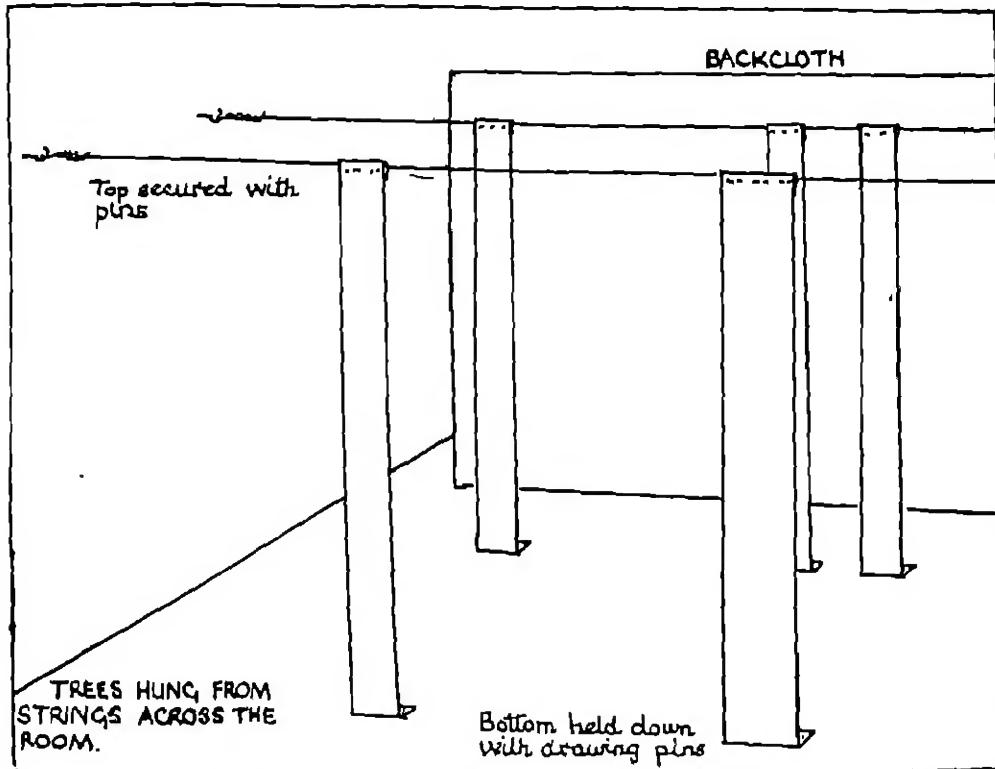


FIG. 5b

A Device for Grouping Trees

any arrangements suggested for acting, the first property arrived. It was a sword, and had been made the previous evening by a boy himself. The teacher let it be put immediately into use when the boys planned out the next scene.

In a day or two, more swords arrived at school, made either by the boys themselves or by keen fathers or interested big brothers. A corner of the classroom was dedicated to properties, and in less than a week there were shields and swords for all knights. Other suggestions followed, and by the time that

class and carried out by them with the minimum of practical help from the teacher.

It is possible that boys may enter more readily into play acting when the play includes only male parts. But this is not necessarily true when they make the play themselves. A class of 9-10-year-olds who made a play around the story of Allan-a-Dale and his true love were quite as serious about fitting out the bride with a suitable wedding costume as in dressing any of the foresters.

There is much material hidden away in some

of the old stories that is particularly suitable for boys to work upon. An example of this will be found in Rawlinson's translation of the *History of Herodotus*, Book I, in the legend of the boyhood of Cyrus, afterwards Cyrus the Great.

The story falls into a number of realistic incidents, each one of which will provide rich material for a scene in a play for older boys.

If the boys are not learning ancient history, the teacher will need to give the story its own setting or the class cannot enter into the right atmosphere.

Given in brief outline the work may be as follows—

### *Story as Setting*

This setting will be given so that the later incidents may be comprehensive, though the story of the setting will not be included in the play. Quite apart from other things, which would not lend themselves to dramatic representation, the lapse of time could not be shown satisfactorily.

Astyages was King of Persia. One night he had a dream which was interpreted to him by the wise men of his country. They said that one day his daughter would have a son and that King Astyages would lose his throne and the boy would reign in his place.

To guard against this calamity, as soon as the child Cyrus was born, King Astyages sent for Harpagus, one of his most faithful officers. Handing over the child to him, he gave orders that Harpagus should carry the child home and there slay him.

But Harpagus feared to do so cruel an act lest at some future time the baby's mother should become Queen and be able to punish. He therefore decided to give the work into the hands of another and sent, with haste, for a herdsman who guarded the flocks on the mountainside, where many wild beasts lurked.

When the herdsman arrived Harpagus gave the child to him with the order: "Astyages requires thee to take this child and lay him in the wildest part of the hills, where he will be sure to die speedily. And he bade me tell thee, that if thou dost not kill the boy, but anyhow allowest him to escape, he will put thee to the most

painful of deaths. I myself am appointed to see the child exposed."

Feeling much troubled, the herdsman carried away the baby to his own home. He desired to get there quickly, for he was anxious about his own wife and tiny son who was just born.

On reaching the house he found his wife in great grief, for during his absence their baby had died.

The herdsman listened to her sad story and then told her his own. When he had finished speaking he uncovered the infant which he carried in his arms and showed him to his wife.

When she looked at the tiny child and saw how beautiful he was, she burst into tears and besought her husband on no account to expose him. But the herdsman was afraid and said that he dare not refuse to carry out the orders which had been given to him. Then the woman spoke a second time and said: "If, then, there is no persuading thee, and a child must needs be seen exposed upon the mountains, at least do thus. Take our dead child and lay it upon the hills, and let us bring up as our own the child of the daughter of Astyages. So shalt thou not be charged with unfaithfulness to thy lord, nor shall we have managed badly for ourselves. Our dead babe will have a royal funeral, and this living child will not be deprived of life."

The idea seemed good and the herdsman decided to adopt it. Without loss of time, he gave the living child into the arms of his wife. Having clothed their own dead child in the costly robe of the little prince, the herdsman carried him forth and laid him in one of the wildest parts on the mountainside.

After three days the herdsman sent word to Harpagus that the child Cyrus was dead. He, having satisfied himself that it was true, ordered that the funeral should take place. So the herdsman's baby was given a royal funeral, and the little prince remained in the herdsman's cottage and grew up there with only the herdsman and his wife to know that he was not their own son.

In telling this introductory story, it is well to quote the words given in direct speech, as if the boys hear a fitting style of language they will be more likely to offer a suitable verbal expression of thought in their own individual contributions.

### The Play

When the herdsman's son was about 10 years of age, an incident occurred which will interest boys and also provide them with some material which can easily be handled for play making. Herodotus relates the incident as follows—

"When the boy was in his tenth year, an accident caused it to be discovered who he was. He was at play one day in the village where the folds of the cattle were, along with the boys of his own age, in the street. The other boys who were playing with him chose the herdsman's son, as he was called, to be their king. He then proceeded to order them about—some he set to build him houses, others he made his guards, one of them was to be the king's eye, another had the office of carrying his messages, all had some task or other.

"Among the boys there was one, the son of Artembaras, a Mede of distinction, who refused to do what Cyrus had set him. Cyrus told the other boys to take him into custody, and when his orders were obeyed, he chastised him most severely with the whip.

"The son of Artembaras, as soon as he was let go, full of rage at treatment so little befitting his rank, hastened to the city and complained bitterly to his father of what had been done by Cyrus. He did not, of course, say 'Cyrus,' by which name the boy was not yet known, but called him the son of the king's herdsman.

"Artembaras, in the heat of his passion, went to Astyages, accompanied by his son, and made complaint of the gross injury which had been done him. Pointing to the boy's shoulders, he exclaimed: 'Thus, O King, has thy slave, the son of a herdsman, heaped insult upon us.'

"At these words Astyages sent for the herdsman and his boy. When they came together into his presence, fixing his eyes on Cyrus, Astyages said: 'Hast thou then, the son of so mean a fellow as that, dared to behave thus rudely to the son of yonder noble, one of the first in my court?' 'My lord,' replied the boy, 'I only treated him as he deserved. I was chosen king by the boys of our village, because they thought me the best for it. He himself was one of the boys who chose me. All the others did according to my orders; but he refused, and

made light of them until at last he got his due reward. If for this I deserve to suffer punishment, here I am ready to submit to it.'"

Herodotus goes on to tell how King Astyages became suspicious as to who the boy was. Dismissing the affairs of Artembaras and his son for the time being, he took Cyrus and the herdsman apart to question them. At first the herdsman insisted that Cyrus was his own boy but at



FIG. 57  
*Cyrus Plays at Being King*

length, when he saw Astyages sign to his body-guard to bind him and carry him away to punishment, he offered to tell the true story. This he did, entreating the King to grant him forgiveness.

The King had not forgotten the prophecy of the Magi, and before he decided what to do with his grandchild he sent for the wise men to consult them. On hearing what had happened they assured the King that all was well. As the boy had ruled as king of the village, with his guards, his doorkeepers, his messengers, and all the other usual officers, he would not reign a second time.

King Astyages decided that he had no more to fear and Cyrus was called into his presence, and was dismissed to safety with these words: "My child, I was led to do thee a wrong by a dream which has come to nothing: from that

wrong thou wert saved by thy own good fortune, Go now with a light heart to Persia : I will provide thy escort. Go, and when thou gettest to thy journey's end, thou wilt behold thy father and thy mother, quite other people from the herdsman and his wife."

The story ends with the homecoming of Cyrus and the welcome given to him by his true parents.

Reference to the *History of Herodotus* will show that careful cuts have been necessary so that unsuitable material is avoided.

The play will naturally fall into four scenes.

#### Scene I

Place : The Village. Characters : Cyrus and a group of boys. Matter : The Game—Choice of a King and the ruling of his subjects.

(The punishment will need careful handling. It will be best to arrange for it to happen off the stage and so be left to imagination.)

#### Scene II

Place : The Palace. Characters : King Astyages and his Bodyguard. Artembares and his son. (Later) Cyrus and the Herdsman. Matter : Complaint of Artembares. Summoning of Cyrus

and the herdsman. Interview with Cyrus and the true story of the herdsman.

(There is a difficulty of time here. A short period would naturally elapse between the complaint being heard and the arrival of Cyrus. If that cannot be foreseen and some solution thought of, it will be necessary to divide this scene into two. It will be well for the boys to try to overcome this difficulty for themselves.)

#### Scene III

Place : The Palace. Characters : King Astyages and his Bodyguard. The Magi. (Later) Cyrus. Matter : Discussion of the prophecy. Decision of the King. Announcement to Cyrus and dismissal to his home.

#### Scene IV

Place : Home of Cyrus in Persia. Characters : Father and Mother of Cyrus, and necessary servants. Cyrus and Escort. Matter : Arrival of Cyrus and Escort. Welcome from his Parents.

It is surprising to what a good standard the Juniors can reach if the training in dramatic work has been consistent and progressive, and has covered the whole period of time of the Junior course.



